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FORS CLAVIGERA

VOL. IV

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS

TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, D.C.L., LL.D.

NEW EDITION

VOL. IV.

(TERMINAL)

CONTAINING LETTERS LXXIII–XCVI

GEORGE ALLEN, SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON

AND

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FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTER LXXIII

COMMISSARIAT

VENICE, 20*th November*, 1876.

THE day on which this letter will be published will, I trust, be the first of the seventh year of the time during which I have been permitted, month by month, to continue the series of Fors Clavigera. If I am spared to continue the letters beyond the seventh year, their second series will take a directly practical character, giving account of, and directing, the actual operations of St. George's Company; and containing elements of instruction for its schools, the scheme of which shall be, I will answer for it, plainly enough by the end of this year, understood. For, in the present volume, I intend speaking directly, in every letter, to the Yorkshire operatives, and answering every question they choose to put to me,—being very sure that they will omit few relevant ones.

And first they must understand one more meaning I have in the title of the book. By calling it

the 'Nail bearer,' I mean not only that it fastens in sure place the truths it has to teach, (January, 1872, vol. i. p. 256,) but also, that it nails down, as on the barn-door of our future homestead, for permanent and picturesque exposition, the extreme follies of which it has to give warning: so that in expanded heraldry of beak and claw, the spread, or split, harpies and owls of modern philosophy may be for evermore studied, by the curious, in the parched skins of them.

For instance, at once, and also for beginning of some such at present needful study, look back to page 398 of Fors, vol. ii., wherein you will find a paragraph thus nailed fast out of the *Pall Mall Gazette* —a paragraph which I must now spend a little more space of barn-door in delicately expanding. It is to the following effect, (I repeat, for the sake of readers who cannot refer to the earlier volumes): "The wealth of this world may be 'practically' regarded as infinitely great. It is not true that what one man appropriates becomes thereby useless to others; and it is also untrue that force or fraud, direct or indirect, are the principal, or indeed that they are at all common or important, modes of acquiring wealth."

You will find this paragraph partly answered, though but with a sneer, in the following page, 399; but I now take it up more seriously, for it is needful you should see the full depth of its lying.

The 'wealth of this world' consists broadly in

its healthy food-giving land, its convenient building land, its useful animals, its useful minerals, its books, and works of art.

The healthy food-giving land, so far from being infinite, is, in fine quality, limited to narrow belts of the globe. What properly belongs to you as Yorkshiremen is only Yorkshire. You by appropriating Yorkshire keep other people from living in Yorkshire. The Yorkshire squires say the whole of Yorkshire belongs to them, and will not let any part of Yorkshire become useful to anybody else, but by enforcing payment of rent for the use of it; nor will the farmers who rent it allow its produce to become useful to anybody else but by demanding the highest price they can get for the same.

The convenient building land of the world is so far from being infinite, that, in London, you find a woman of eight-and-twenty paying one-and-ninepence a week for a room in which she dies of suffocation with her child in her arms; Fors, December, 1872, (vol. i. p. 496); and, in Edinburgh, you find people paying two pounds twelve shillings a year for a space nine feet long, five broad, and six high, ventilated only by the chimney; Fors, April, 1874, (vol. ii. p. 345); and compare March, 1873, (vol. ii. p. 65).

The useful animals of the world are not infinite: the finest horses are very rare; and the squires who ride them, by appropriating them, prevent you and me from riding them. If you and I and

the rest of the mob took them from the squires, we could not at present probably ride them; and unless we cut them up and ate them, we could not divide them among us, because they are not infinite.

The useful minerals of Yorkshire are iron, coal, and marble, — in large quantities, but not infinite quantities by any means; and the masters and managers of the coal mines, spending their coal on making useless things out of the iron, prevent the poor all over England from having fires, so that they can now only afford close stoves, (if those!) Fors, March, 1873, (vol. ii. p. 71).

The books and works of art in Yorkshire are not infinite, nor even in England. Mr. Fawkes' Turners are many, but not infinite at all, and as long as they are at Farnley they can't be at Sheffield. My own thirty Turners are not infinite, and as long as they are at Oxford, can't be at Sheffield. You won't find, I believe, another such thirteenth-century Bible as I have given you, in all Yorkshire; and so far from other books being infinite, there's hardly a woman in England, now, who reads a clean one, because she can't afford to have one but by borrowing.

So much for the infinitude of wealth. For the mode of obtaining it, all the land in England was first taken by force, and is now kept by force. Some day, I do not doubt, you will yourselves seize it by force. Land never has been, nor can be, got, nor kept, otherwise, when the population on it was

as large as it could maintain. The establishment of laws respecting its possession merely defines and directs the force by which it is held: and fraud, so far from being an unimportant mode of acquiring wealth, is now the only possible one; our merchants say openly that no man *can* become rich by honest dealing. And it is precisely because fraud and force *are* the chief means of becoming rich, that a writer for the *Pall Mall Gazette* was found capable of writing this passage. No man could by mere overflow of his natural folly have written it. Only in the settled purpose of maintaining the interest of Fraud and Force; only in fraudfully writing for the concealment of Fraud, and frantically writing for the help of unjust Force, do literary men become so senseless.

The wealth of the world is not infinite, then, my Sheffield friends; and moreover, it is most of it unjustly divided, because it has been gathered by fraud, or by dishonest force, and distributed at the will, or lavished by the neglect, of such iniquitous gatherers. And you have to ascertain definitely, if you will be wise Yorkshiremen, how much of it is actually within your reach in Yorkshire, and may be got without fraud, by *honest* force. Compare propositions 5 and 6, October, 1872, (vol. i. pp. 437, 438).

It ought to be a very pleasant task to you, this ascertaining how much wealth is within your reach in Yorkshire, if, as I see it stated in the article of the *Times* on Lord Beaconsfield's speech at the

Lord Mayor's dinner, quoted in *Galignani* of the 10th of November, 1876: "The immense accession of wealth which this country has received through the development of the railway system and the establishment of free trade, makes the present war expenditure," etc., etc., etc. What it does in the way of begetting and feeding Woolwich Infants is not at present your affair; your business is to find out what it does, and what you can help it to do, in making it prudent for you to beget, and easy for you to feed, Yorkshire infants.

But are you quite sure the *Times* is right? Are we indeed, to begin with, richer than we were? How is anybody to know? Is there a man in Sheffield who can,—I do not say, tell you what the country is worth, -but even show you how to set about ascertaining what it is worth?

The *Times* way, *Morning Post* way, and *Daily News* way of finding out, is an easy one enough, if only it be exact.

Look back to Fors of December, 1871, (vol. i. p. 248), and you will find the *Times* telling you that "by every kind of measure, and on every principle of calculation, the growth of our prosperity is established," because we drink twice as much beer, and smoke three times as many pipes, as we used to. But it is quite conceivable to *me* that a man may drink twice as much beer, and smoke three times as many pipes, as he used to do, yet not be the richer man for it, nor his wife or children materially better off for it.

Again, the *Morning Post* tells you (Fors, October, 1872, vol. i. p. 433) that because the country is at present in a state of unexampled prosperity, coals and meat are at famine prices; and the *Daily News* tells you (Fors, May, 1873, vol. ii. p. 98) that because coals are at famine prices, the capital of the country is increased. By the same rule, when everything else is at famine prices, the capital of the country will be at its maximum, and you will all starve in the proud moral consciousness of an affluence unprecedented in the history of the universe. In the meantime your wealth and prosperity have only advanced you to the moderately enviable point of not being able to indulge in what the *Cornhill Magazine* (Fors, April, 1873, vol. ii. p. 95) calls the "luxury of a wife," till you are forty-five—unless you choose to sacrifice all your prospects in life for that unjustifiable piece of extravagance;—and your young women (Fors, May, 1873, vol. ii. p. 110) are applying, two thousand at a time, for places in the Post Office!

All this is doubtless very practical, and business-like, and comfortable, and truly English. But suppose you set your wits to work for once in a Florentine or Venetian manner, and ask, as a merchant of Venice would have asked, or a 'good man' of the trades of Florence, *how much money there is in the town*,—who has got it, and what is becoming of it? These, my Sheffield friends, are the first of economical problems for *you*, depend upon it; perfectly soluble when you set straightforwardly

about them; or, so far as insoluble, instantly indicating the places where the roguery is. Of money honestly got, and honourably in use, you can get account: of money ill got, and used to swindle with, you will get none.

But take account at least of what is countable. Your initial proceeding must be to map out a Sheffield district clearly. Within the border of that, you will hold yourselves Sheffielders;—outside of it, let the Wakefield and Bradford people look after themselves; but determine your own limits, and see that things are managed well within them. Your next work is to count heads. You must register every man, woman, and child, in your Sheffield district; (compare and read carefully the opening of the Fors of February last year;) then register their incomes and expenditure; it will be a business, but when you have done it, you will know what you are about, and how much the town is really worth.

Then the next business is to establish a commissariat. Knowing how many mouths you have to feed, you know how much food is wanted daily. To get that quantity good; and to distribute it without letting middlemen steal the half of it, is the first great duty of civic authority in villages, of ducal authority in cities and provinces, and of kingly authority in kingdoms.

Now, for the organization of your commissariat, there are two laws to be carried into effect, as you gain intelligence and unity, very different from

anything yet conceived for your co-operative stores —(which are a good and wise beginning, no less). Of which laws the first is that, till all the mouths in the Sheffield district are fed, no food must be sold to strangers. Make all the ground in your district as productive as possible, both in cattle and vegetables; and see that such meat and vegetables be distributed swiftly to those who most need them, and eaten fresh. Not a mouthful of anything is to be sold across the border, while any one is hungry within it.

Then the second law is, that as long as any one remains unfed, or barebacked, the wages fund must be in common.* When every man, woman, and child is fed and clothed, the saving men may begin to lay by money, if they like; but while there is hunger and cold among you, there must be absolutely no purse-feeding, nor coin-wrapping. You have so many bellies to fill;—so much wages fund (besides the eatable produce of the district) to do it with.† Every man must bring all he earns to the common stock.

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* Don't shriek out at this, for an impossible fancy of St. George's. St. George only cares about, and tells you, the constantly necessary laws in a well-organized state. *This* is a temporarily expedient law in a distressed one. No man, of a boat's crew on short allowance in the Atlantic, is allowed to keep provisions in a private locker;—still less must any man of the crew of a *city* on short allowance.

† "But how if other districts refused to sell *us* food, as you say we should refuse to sell food to *them?*"

You *Sheffielders* are to refuse to sell food only because food is scarce with you, and cutlery plenty. And as you had once a

"What! and the industrious feed the idle?"

Assuredly, my friends; and the more assuredly because under that condition you will presently come to regard their idleness as a social offence, and deal with it as such: which is precisely the view God means you to take of it, and the dealing He intends you to measure to it. But if you think yourselves exempted from feeding the idle, you will presently believe yourselves privileged to take advantage of their idleness by lending money to them at usury, raising duties on their dissipation, and buying their stock and furniture cheap when they fail in business. Whereupon you will soon be thankful that your neighbour's shutters are still up, when yours are down; and gladly promote his vice for your advantage. With no ultimate good to yourself, even at the devil's price, believe me.

Now, therefore, for actual beginning of organization of this Sheffield commissariat, since probably, at present, you won't be able to prevail on the Duke of York to undertake the duty, you must elect a duke of Sheffield, for yourselves. Elect a doge, if, for the present, to act only as purveyor-general:—honest doge he must be, with an active and kind duchess. If you can't find a couple of honest and well-meaning married souls in all

reputation for cutlery, and have yet skill enough left to recover it if you will, the other districts of England (and some abroad) will be glad still to give you some of their dinner in exchange for knives and forks,—which is a perfectly sagacious and expedient arrangement for all concerned.

Sheffield to trust the matter to, I have nothing more to say: for by such persons, and by such virtue in them only, is the thing to be done.

Once found, you are to give them fixed salary * and fixed authority; no prince has ever better earned his income, no consul ever needed stronger lictors, than these will, in true doing of their work. Then, by these, the accurately estimated demand, and the accurately measured supply, are to be coupled, with the least possible slack of chain; and the quality of food, and price, absolutely tested and limited.

But what's to become of the middleman?

If you really saw the middleman at his work, you would not ask that twice. Here's my publisher, Mr. Allen, gets tenpence a dozen for his cabbages; the consumer pays threepence each. That is to say, you pay for three cabbages and a half, and the middleman keeps two and a half for himself, and gives you one.

Suppose you saw this financial gentleman, in bodily presence, toll-taking at your door,—that you bought three loaves, and saw him pocket two, and pick the best crust off the third as he handed it in;—that you paid for a pot of beer, and saw

* The idea of fixed salary, I thankfully perceive, is beginning to be taken up by philanthropic persons, (see notice of the traffic in intoxicating liquors in *Pall Mall Budget* for December 1, 1876,) but still connected with the entirely fatal notion that they are all to have a fixed salary themselves for doing nothing but lend money, which, till they wholly quit themselves of, they will be helpless for good.

him drink two-thirds of it and hand you over the pot and sops,—would you long ask, then, what was to become of him?

To my extreme surprise, I find, on looking over my two long-delayed indexes, that there occurs not in either of them the all-important monosyllable 'Beer.' But if you will look out the passages referred to in the index to vol. ii., under the article 'Fish,' and now study them at more leisure, and consecutively, they will give you some clear notion of what the benefit of middlemen is to you; then, finally take the Fors of March, 1873, (vol. ii.) and read the 65th page carefully,—and you will there see that it has been shown by Professor Kirk, that out of the hundred and fifty-six millions of pounds which you prove your prosperity by spending annually on beer and tobacco, you pay a hundred millions to the rich middlemen, and thirty millions to the middling middlemen, and for every two shillings you pay, get threepence-halfpenny-worth of beer to swallow!

Meantime, the Bishop, and the Rector, and the Rector's lady, and the dear old Quaker spinster who lives in Sweetbriar Cottage, are *so* shocked that you drink so much, and that you are such horrid wretches that nothing can be done for you! and you mustn't have your wages raised, because you *will* spend them in nothing but drink. And to-morrow they are all going to dine at Drayton Park, with the brewer who is your member of Parliament, and is building a public-house at the

railway station, and another in the High Street, and another at the corner of Philpott's Lane, and another by the stables at the back of Tunstall Terrace, outside the town, where he has just bricked over the Dovesbourne, and filled Buttercup Meadow with broken bottles; and, by every measure, and on every principle of calculation, the growth of your prosperity is established!

You helpless sots and simpletons! Can't you at least manage to set your wives—what you have got of them—to brew your beer, and give you an honest pint of it for your money? Let *them* have the halfpence first, anyhow, if they must have the kicks afterwards.

Read carefully over, then, thirsty and hungry friends, concerning these questions of meat and drink, that whole Fors of March, 1873; but chiefly Sir Walter's letter, and what it says of Education, as useless, unless you limit your tippling-houses.

Yet some kind of education is instantly necessary to give you the courage and sense to limit them. If I were in your place, I should drink myself to death in six months, because I had nothing to amuse me; and such education, therefore, as may teach you how to be rightly amused I am trying with all speed to provide for you. For, indeed, all real education, though it begins in the wisdom of John the Baptist—(quite *literally* so; first in washing with pure water,) goes on into an entirely merry and amused life, like St. Ursula's; and ends in a delightsome death. But to be amused like St.

Ursula you must feel like her, and become interested in the distinct nature of Bad and Good. Above all, you must learn to know faithful and good men from miscreants. Then you will be amused by knowing the histories of the good ones—and very greatly entertained by visiting their tombs, and seeing their statues. You will even feel yourselves pleased, some day, in walking considerable distances, with that and other objects, and so truly seeing foreign countries, and the shrines of the holy men who are alive in them, as well as the shrines of the dead. You will even, should a voyage be necessary, learn to rejoice upon the sea, provided you know first how to row upon it, and to catch the winds that rule it with bright sails. You will be amused by seeing pretty people wear beautiful dresses when you are not kept yourselves in rags, to pay for them; you will be amused by hearing beautiful music, when you can get your steam-devil's tongues, and throats, and wind-holes anywhere else, stopped, that you may hear it; and take enough pains yourselves to learn to know it, when you do. All which sciences and arts St. George will teach you, in good time, if you are obedient to him:—without obedience, neither he nor any saint in heaven can help you. Touching which, now of all men hated and abused, virtue,—and the connection more especially of the arts of the Muse with its universal necessity,—I have translated a piece of Plato for you, which, here following, I leave you to meditate on till next month.

'The Athenian.'—It is true, my friends, that over certain of the laws, with us, our populace had authority; but it is no less true that there were others to which they were entirely subject.

'The Spartan.'—Which mean you?

'The Athenian.'—First, those which in that day related to music, if indeed we are to trace up to its root the change which has issued in our now too licentious life.

For, at that time, music was divided according to certain ideas and forms necessarily inherent in it; and one kind of songs consisted of prayers to the gods, and were called hymns; and another kind, contrary to these, for the most part were called laments,* and another, songs of resolute strength and triumph, were sacred to Apollo; and a fourth, springing out of the frank joy of life, were sacred to Dionusos, and called 'dithyrambs.'† And these modes of music they called Laws as they did

* The Coronach of the Highlanders represents this form of music down to nearly our own days. It is to be defined as the sacredly ordered expression of the sorrow permitted to human frailty, but contrary to prayer, according to Plato's words, because expressing will contrary to the will of God.

† "The origin of this word is unknown" (Liddell and Scott). But there must have been an idea connected with a word in so constant use, and spoken of matters so intimately interesting; and I have myself no doubt that a sense of the doubling and redoubling caused by instinctive and artless pleasure in sound, as in nursery rhymes, extended itself gradually in the Greek mind into a conception of the universal value of what may be summed in our short English word 'reply'; as, first, in the reduplication of its notes of rapture by the nightingale,—then, in the entire system of adjusted accents, rhythms, strophes, antistrophes, and echoes of burden; and, to the Greek, most practically in the balanced or interchanged song of answering bodies of chorus entering from opposite doors on the stage: continuing down to our own days in the alternate chant of the singers on each side of the choir.

Laws respecting other matters; but the laws of music for distinction's sake were called Harp-laws.

And these four principal methods, and certain other subordinate ones, having been determined, it was not permitted to use one kind of melody for the purpose of another; and the authority to judge of these, and to punish all who disobeyed the laws concerning them, was not, as now, the hissing, or the museless * cry of the multitude in dispraise, neither their clapping for praise: but it was the function of men trained in the offices of education to hear all in silence; and to the children and their tutors, and the most of the multitude, the indication of order was given with the staff; † and

* 'Museless,' as one says 'shepherdless,' unprotected or helped by the Muse.

† I do not positively understand this, but the word used by Plato signifies properly, 'putting in mind,' or rather putting in the notion, or 'nous'; and I believe the wand of the master of the theatre was used for a guide to the whole audience, as that of the leader of the orchestra is to the band,—not merely, nor even in any principal degree, for time-keeping, (which a pendulum in his place would do perfectly), but for exhortation and encouragement. Supposing an audience thoroughly bent on listening and understanding, one can conceive the suggestion of parts requiring attention, the indication of subtle rhythm which would have escaped uncultivated ears, and the claim for sympathy in parts of singular force and beauty, expressed by a master of the theatre, with great help and pleasure to the audience: we can imagine it best by supposing some great, acknowledged, and popular master, conducting his own opera, secure of the people's sympathy. A people not generous enough to give sympathy, nor modest enough to be grateful for leading, is not capable of hearing or understanding music. In our own schools, however, all that is needful is the early training of children under true musical law; and the performance, under excellent masters, of appointed courses of beautiful music, as an essential part of all popular instruction, no less important than the placing of classical books and of noble pictures, within the daily reach and sight of the people.

in all these matters the multitude of the citizens was willing to be governed, and did not dare to judge by tumult; but after these things, as time went on, there were born, beginners of the museless libertinage,—poets, who were indeed poetical by nature, but incapable of recognizing what is just and lawful for the Muse; exciting themselves in passion, and possessed, more than is due, by the love of pleasure: and these mingling laments with hymns, and pæans with dithyrambs, and mimicking the pipe with the harp, and dragging together everything into everything else, involuntarily and by their want of natural instinct * led men into the false thought that there is no positive rightness whatsoever in music, but that one may judge rightly of it by the pleasure of those who enjoy it, whether their own character be good or bad. And constructing such poems as these, and saying, concerning them, such words as these, they led the multitude into rebellion against the laws of music, and the daring of trust in their own capacity to judge of it. Whence the theatric audiences, that once were voiceless, became clamorous, as having professed knowledge, in the things belonging to the Muses, of what was beautiful and not; and instead of aristocracy in that knowledge, rose up a certain polluted theatrocracy. For if indeed the democracy had been itself composed of more or less well-educated persons, there would not have been so much harm; but from this beginning in music, sprang up general disloyalty, and *pronouncing of their own opinion by everybody about everything;* and on this followed mere licentiousness, for, having no fear of speaking, supposing themselves to know, fearlessness begot shamelessness. For, in our audacity, to have no fear of the opinion of

* Literally, 'want of notion or conception.'

the better person, is in itself a corrupt impudence, ending in extremity of license. And on this will always follow the resolve no more to obey established authorities; then, beyond this, men are fain to refuse the service and reject the teaching of father and mother, and of all old age,—and so one is close to the end of refusing to obey the national laws, and at last to think no more of oath, or faith, or of the gods themselves: thus at last likening themselves to the ancient and monstrous nature of the Titans, and filling their lives full of ceaseless misery.

LETTER LXXIV

FATHER LAW

VENICE, *Christmas Day*, 1876.*

LAST night, St. Ursula sent me her dianthus, "out of her bedroom window, with her love," and, as I was standing beside it, this morning,—(ten minutes ago only,—it has just struck eight,) watching the sun rise out of a low line of cloud, just midway between the domes of St. George, and the Madonna of Safety, there came into my mind the cause of our difficulties about the Eastern question: with considerable amazement to myself that I had not thought of it before; but, on the contrary, in what I had intended to say, been misled, hitherto, into quite vain collection of the little I knew about either Turkey or Russia; and entirely lost sight, (though actually at this time chiefly employed with it!) of what Little Bear has thus sent me the flower out of the dawn in her window, to put me in mind of,—the religious meanings of the matter.

I must explain her sign to you more clearly before I can tell you these.

* I believe the following entry to be of considerable importance to our future work; and I leave it, uncorrected, as it was written at the time for that reason.

She sent me the living dianthus, (with a little personal message besides, of great importance to *me*, but of none to the matter in hand,) by the hands of an Irish friend now staying here: but she had sent me also, in the morning, from England, a dried sprig of the other flower in her window, the sacred vervain,* by the hands of the friend who is helping me in all I want for 'Proserpina,'—Mr. Oliver.

Now the vervain is the ancient flower sacred to domestic purity; and one of the chief pieces of teaching which showed me the real nature of classic life, came to me ten years ago, in learning by heart one of Horace's house-songs, in which he especially associates this herb with the *cheerful* service—yet sacrificial service—of the household Gods.

"The whole house laughs in silver;—maid and boy in happy confusion run hither and thither; the altar, wreathed with chaste vervain, asks for its sprinkling with the blood of the lamb."

Again, the Dianthus, of which I told you more was to be learned, means, translating that Greek name, "Flower of God," or especially of the Greek

* I had carelessly and very stupidly taken the vervain for a decorative modification of olive. It is painted with entire veracity, so that my good friend Signor Caldara, (who is painting Venetian flowers for us, knew it for the "Erba Luisa" at the first glance,) went to the Botanical Gardens here, and painted it from the life. I will send his painting, with my own drawing of the plant from the Carpaccio picture, to the Sheffield museum. They can there be photographed for any readers of Fors who care to see such likeness of them.

Father of the Gods; and it is of all wild flowers in Greece the brightest and richest in its divine beauty. (In 'Proserpina,' note classification.*)

Now, see the use of myths, when they are living.

You have the Domestic flower, and the Wild flower.

You have the Christian sacrifice of the Passover, for the Household; and the universal worship of Allah, the Father of all,—our Father which art in Heaven,—made of specialty to you by the light of the crimson wild flower on the mountains; and all this by specialty of sign sent to you in Venice, by the Saint whose mission it was to convert the savage people of "England over-sea."

I am here interrupted by a gift, from another friend, of a little painting of the 'pitcher' (Venetian water-carrier's) of holy water, with the sprinkling thing in it,—I don't know its name,—but it reminds me of the "Tu asperges" in Lethe, in the Purgatorio, and of other matters useful to me: but mainly observe from it, in its bearing on our work, that the blood of Sprinkling, common to the household of the Greek, Roman, and the Jew,—and water of Sprinkling, common to all nations on earth, in the Baptism to which Christ submitted,—the one, speaketh better things than that of Abel, and the other than that unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, in so far as they give *joy* together with their purity; so that the Lamb of the Passover itself,

* All left as written, in confusion: I will make it clear presently.

and the Pitcher of Water borne by him who showed the place of it, alike are turned, the one, by the last Miracle, into sacramental wine which immortally in the sacred Spirit makes glad the Heart of Man, and the other, by the first Miracle, into the Marriage wine, which here, and immortally in the sacred, because purified Body, makes glad the Life of Man.

2nd January, 1877.

Thus far I wrote in the morning and forenoon of Christmas Day: and leave it so, noting only that the reference to the classification in 'Proserpina' is to the name there given for the whole order of the pinks, including the dianthus,—namely, Clarissa. It struck me afterwards that it would be better to have made it simply 'Clara,'—which, accordingly, I have now determined it shall be. The Dianthus will be the first sub-species; but note that this Greek name is modern, and bad Greek also; yet to be retained, for it is *our* modern contribution to the perfectness of the myth. Carpaccio meant it, first and practically, for a balcony window-flower—as the vervain is also; and what more, I can't say, or seek, to-day, for I must turn now to the business for this month, the regulation of our Sheffield vegetable market;—yet for *that*, even you will have to put up with another page or two of myth, before we can get rightly at it.

I must ask you to look back to Fors of August, 1872, (vol. ii. p. 387); and to hear why the boy

with his basket of figs was so impressive a sign to me.

He was selling them before the south façade of the Ducal Palace; which, built in the fourteenth century, has two notable sculptures on its corner-stones. Now, that palace is the perfect type of such a building as should be made the seat of a civic government exercising all needful powers.* How soon you may wish to build such an one at Sheffield depends on the perfection of the government you can develop there, and the dignity of state which you desire it should assume. For the men who took counsel in that palace "considered the poor," and heard the requests of the poorest citizens, in a manner of which you have had as yet no idea given you by any government visible in Europe.

This palace being, as I said, built in the fourteenth century, when the nation liked to express its thoughts in sculpture, and being essentially the national palace, its builder, speaking as it were the mind of the whole people, signed first, on its corner-stones, their consent, in the scriptural definition of worldly happiness,—"Every man shall dwell under his vine and under his fig tree." And out of one corner-stone he carved a fig tree: out of the other, a vine. But to show upon what conditions, only, such happiness was to be secured,

* State prisoners were kept in the palace, instead of in a separate tower, as was our practice in London, that none might be in bonds more than a month before they were brought up for judgment.

he thought proper also on each stone to represent the temptations which it involved, and the danger of yielding to them. Under the fig tree he carved Adam and Eve, unwisely gathering figs: under the vine, Noah, unwisely gathering grapes.

'*Gathering*,' observe; — in both instances the hand is on the fruit; the sculpture of the Drunkenness of Noah differing in this from the usual treatment of the subject.

These two sculptures represent broadly the two great divisions of the sins of men: those of Disobedience, or sins against known command,— Presumptuous sins—and therefore, against Faith and Love; and those of Error, or sins against unknown command, sins of Ignorance—or, it may be, of Weakness, but not against Faith, nor against Love.

These corner-stones form the chief decoration or grace of its strength—meaning, if you read them in their national lesson, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Then, next above these stones of warning, come the stones of Judgment and Help.

3rd January, 1877.

Above the sculpture of Presumptuous Sin is carved the angel Michael, with the lifted sword. Above the sculpture of Erring Sin, is carved the angel Raphael, leading Tobias, and his dog.

Not *Tobit*, and his dog, observe. It is very needful for us to understand the separate stories of the father and son, which gave this subject so deep a

meaning to the mediæval Church. Read the opening chapter of Tobit, to the end of his prayer. That prayer, you will find, is the seeking of death rather than life, in entirely noble despair. Erring, but innocent; blind, but *not thinking that he saw*,—therefore without sin.

To him the angel of all beautiful life is sent, hidden in simplicity of human duty, taking a servant's place for hire, to lead his son in all right and happy ways of life, explaining to him, and showing to all of us who read, in faith, for ever, what is the root of all the material evil in the world, the great error of seeking pleasure before use. This is the dreadfulness which brings the true horror of death into the world, which hides God in death, and which makes all the lower creatures of God—even the happiest, suffer with us,—even the most innocent, injure us.*

But the young man's dog went with them—and returned, to show that all the lower creatures, who can love, have passed, through their love, into the guardianship and guidance of angels.

And now you will understand why I told you in the last Fors for last year that you must eat angels' food before you could eat material food.

Tobit got leave at last, you see, to go back to his dinner.

Now, I have two pretty stories to tell you, (though I must not to-day,) of a Venetian dog, which were

* Measure,—who can,—the evil that the Horse and Dog, worshipped before God, have done to England.

told to me on Christmas Day last, by Little Bear's special order. Her own dog, at the foot of her bed, is indeed unconscious of the angel with the palm; but is taking care of his mistress's earthly crown; and St. Jerome's dog, in his study, is seriously and admiringly interested in the progress of his master's literary work, though not, of course, understanding the full import of it.

The dog in the vision to the shepherds, and the cattle in the Nativity, are always essential to these myths, for the same reason; and in next Fors, you shall have with the stories of the Venetian dog, the somewhat more important one of St. Theodore's horse,—God willing. Finally, here are four of the grandest lines of an English prophet, sincere as Carpaccio, which you will please remember:

> 'The bat that flits at close of eve,
> Hath left the brain that won't believe.'
>
> 'Hurt not the moth, nor butterfly,
> For the Last Judgment draweth nigh.'

And now, Tobit having got back to his dinner, we may think of ours: only Little Bear *will* have us hear a little reading still, in the refectory. Take patience but a minute or two more.

Long ago, in 'Modern Painters,' I dwelt on the, to me, utter marvellousness, of that saying of Christ, (when "on this wise showed He Himself")—

"Come and dine. . . . .

. . . . So when they had dined," etc.

I understand it now, with the "Children, have ye

here any meat?" of the vision in the chamber. My hungry and thirsty friends, do not you also begin to understand the sacredness of your daily bread; nor the divinity of the great story of the world's beginning;—the infinite truth of its "Touch not—taste not—handle not, of the things that perish in the using, but only of things which, whether ye eat or drink, are to the glory of God"?

But a few more words about Venice, and we come straight to Sheffield.

My boy with his basket of rotten figs *could* only sell them in front of the sculpture of Noah, because all the nobles had perished from Venice, and he was there, poor little costermonger, stooping to cry 'fighiaic' between his legs, where the stateliest lords in Europe were wont to walk, erect enough, and in no disordered haste. (Curiously, as I write this very page, one of the present authorities in progressive Italy, progressive without either legs or arms, has gone whizzing by, up the canal, in a steam propeller, like a large darting water beetle.) He *could* only sell them in that place, because the Lords of Venice were fallen, as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs; and the sentence is spoken against them, "No man eat fruit of thee, hereafter." And he could only sell them in Venice at all, because the laws of the greater Lords of Venice who *built* her palaces are disobeyed in her modern liberties. Hear this, from the Venetian Laws of State respecting "Frutti e Fruttaroli," preserved in the Correr Museum.

19th June, 1516.*—"It is forbidden to all and sundry to sell bad fruits. Figs, especially, must not be kept in the shop from one day to another, on pain of fine of twenty-five lire."

30th June, 1518.—"The sale of squeezed figs and preserved figs is forbidden. They are to be sold ripe."

10th June, 1523.—"Figs cannot be preserved nor packed. They are to be sold in the same day that they are brought into this city."

The intent of these laws is to supply the people largely and cheaply with ripe fresh figs from the mainland, and to prevent their ever being eaten in a state injurious to health, on the one side, or kept, to raise the price, on the other. Note the continual connection between Shakspeare's ideal, both of commerce and fairyland, with Greece, and Venice: "Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,—with purple grapes, *green* figs, and mulberries;" the laws of Venice respecting this particular fruit being originally Greek; (Athenian; see derivation of word 'sycophant,' in any good dictionary).

But the next law, 7th July, 1523, introduces question of a fruit still more important to Venetians.

"On pain of fine (ut supra), let no spoiled or decaying melons or bottle-gourds be sold, nor any yellow cucumbers."

9th June, 1524.—"The sale of fruits which are not good and nourishing is forbidden to every one, both on the canals and lands of this city. Similarly, it is

* "Innibito a chiunque il vendere frutti cattivi." *Before* 1516, observe, nobody *thought* of doing so.

forbidden to keep them in baskets more than a day; and, similarly, to keep bad mixed with the good."

On the 15th July, 1545, a slight relaxation is granted of this law, as follows: "Sellers of melons cannot sell them either unripe or decayed (crudi o marci), without putting a ticket on them, to certify them as such."

And to ensure obedience to these most wholesome ordinances of state, the life of the Venetian greengrocer was rendered, (according to Mr. John Bright,*) a burden to him, by the following regulations:—

6th July, 1559. — "The superintendents of fruits shall be confined to the number of eight, of whom two every week, (thus securing a monthly service of the whole octave,) shall stand at the barrier, to the end that no fruits may pass, of any kind, that are not good."

* (Fors, January, 1874, vol. ii. p. 277.)

I observe that, in his recent speech at Rochdale, Mr. Bright makes mention of me which he "hopes I shall forgive." There is no question of forgiveness in the matter; Mr. Bright speaks of me what he believes to be true, and what, to the best of his knowledge, is so: he quotes a useful passage from the part of my books which he understands; and a notable stanza from the great song of Sheffield, whose final purport, nevertheless, Mr. Bright himself reaches only the third part of the way to understanding. He has left to me the duty of expressing the ultimate force of it, in such rude additional rhyme as came to me yesterday, while walking to and fro in St. Mark's porch, beside the grave of the Duke Marino Morosini; a man who knew more of the East than Mr. Bright, and than most of his Rochdale audience; but who nevertheless shared the incapacity of Socrates, Plato, and Epaminondas, to

More special regulations follow, for completeness of examination; the refusal to obey the law becoming gradually, it is evident, more frequent as the moral temper of the people declined, until, just two centuries after the issuing of the first simple order, that no bad fruit is to be sold, the attempts at evasion have become both cunning and resolute, to the point of requiring greater power to be given to the officers, as follows:—

28th April, 1725.—"The superintendents of the fruits may go through the shops, and seek in every place for fruits of bad quality, and they shall not be impeded by

conceive the grandeur of the ceremony "which took place yesterday in Northern India."

Here is Ebenezer's stanza, then, with its sequence, taught me by Duke Morocen:—

What shall Bread-Tax do for thee,
Venerable Monarchy?
Dreams of evil,—sparing sight,
Let that horror rest in night.

What shall Drink-Tax do for thee,
Faith-Defending Monarchy?
Priestly King,—is *this* thy sign,
Sale of Blessing,—Bread,—and Wine?

What shall Roof-Tax do for thee,
Life-Defending Monarchy?
Find'st thou rest for England's head,
Only free among the Dead?
Loosing still the stranger's slave.—
Sealing still thy Garden-Grave?
Kneel thou there; and trembling pray,
"Angels, roll the stone away."

(Venice, 11th January, 1877.)

whomsoever it may be. They shall mount upon the boats of melons and other fruits, and shall prohibit the sale of bad ones, and shall denounce transgressors to the magistracy."

Nor did the government once relax its insistance, or fail to carry its laws into effect, as long as there was a Duke in Venice. Her people are now Free, and all the glorious liberties of British trade are achieved by them. And having been here through the entire autumn, I have not once been able to taste wall-fruit from the Rialto market, which was not *both* unripe and rotten, it being invariably gathered hard, to last as long as possible in the baskets; and of course the rottenest sold first, and the rest as it duly attains that desirable state.

The Persian fruits, however, which, with pears and cherries, fill the baskets on the Ducal Palace capitals, are to the people of far less importance than the gourd and melon. The 'melon boats,' as late as 1845, were still so splendid in beauty of fruit, that my then companion, J. D. Harding, always spent with me the first hour of our day in drawing at the Rialto market. Of these fruits, being a staple article in constant domestic consumption, not only the quality, but the price, became an object of anxious care to the government; and the view taken by the Venetian Senate on the question I proposed to you in last Fors, the function of the middle-man in raising prices, is fortunately preserved at length in the following decree of 8th July, 1577:—

Decree of the Most Illustrious Lords, the Five of the Mariegole.*

"It is manifestly seen that Melons in this City have reached a price at which scarcely anybody is bold enough to buy them; a condition of things discontenting to everybody, and little according with the dignity of the persons whose duty it is to take such precautionary measures as may be needful," (the Five, most Illustrious, to wit,) "and although our Presessors† and other Magistrates, who from time to time have had special regard to this difficulty, have made many and divers provisional decrees, yet it is seen manifestly that they have always been vain, nor have ever brought forth the good effect which was desired: and the cause of this is seen expressly to be a great number of buyers-to-sell-again who find themselves in this city, and in whose presence it is impossible so quickly to make public anything relating to the import or export of food, but this worst sort of men pounce on it,‡ and buy it, before it is born; in this, using all the intelligences, cunnings, and frauds which it is possible to imagine; so that the people of this city cannot any more buy anything, for their living, of the proper Garden-master of it: but only from the buyers-to sell again, through whose hands such things will pass two or three times before they are sold, which

* A Mariegola, Madre-Regola, or Mother-Law, is the written code of the religious and secular laws either of a club of Venetian gentlemen, or a guild of Venetian tradesmen. With my old friend Mr. Edward Cheney's help, I shall let you hear something of these, in next Fors.

† Those who before us sat on this Seat of Judgment.

‡ Most illustrious, a little better grammar might here have been advisable;—had indignation permitted!

notable disorder is not by any manner of means to be put up with. Wherefore, both for the universal benefit of all the City, and for the dignity of our Magistracy, the great and illustrious Lords, the Five Wise Men, and Foreseers upon the Mariegole, make it publicly known that henceforward there may be no one so presumptuous as to dare, whether as Fruiterer, Green-grocer, Buyer-to-sell-again, or under name of any other kind of person of what condition soever, to sell melons of any sort, whether in the shops or on the shore of our island of Rialto, beginning from the bridge of Rialto as far as the bridge of the Beccaria; and similarly in any part of the piazza of St. Mark, the Pescaria, or the Tèra Nuova,* under penalty to whosoever such person shall sell or cause to be sold contrary to the present order, of 120 ducats for each time; to lose the melons, and to be whipped round the Piazza of the Rialto, or of San Marco, wheresoever he has done contrary to the law;" but the Garden-masters and gardeners may sell where they like, and nobody shall hinder them.

5th January, Morning.

I will give the rest of this decree in next Fors; but I must pause to-day, for you have enough before you to judge of the methods taken by the Duke and the statesmen of Venice for the ordering of her merchandize, and the aid of her poor.

I say, for the ordering of her merchandize; other merchandize than this she had;—pure gold, and ductile crystal, and inlaid marble,—various as the

* These limitations referring to the Rialto market and piazza, leave the *town* greengrocers free to sell, they being under vowed discipline of the Mariegola of Greengrocers.

flowers in mountain turf. But her first care was the food of the poor; she knew her first duty was to see that they had each day their daily bread. Their corn and pomegranate; crystal, not of flint, but life; manna, not of the desert, but the home—"Thou shalt let none of it stay until the morning."

"To *see* that they had their daily bread;" yes—but how to make such vision sure? My friends, there is yet one more thing, and the most practical of all, to be observed by you as to the management of your commissariat. Whatever laws you make about your bread—however wise and brave,—you will not get it unless you pray for it. If you would not be fed with stones, by a Father Devil, you must ask for bread from your Father, God. In a word, you must understand the Lord's Prayer—and *pray it;* knowing, and desiring, the Good you ask; knowing also, and abhorring, the Evil you ask to be delivered from. Knowing and obeying your Father who is in Heaven; knowing and wrestling with 'your Destroyer' who is come down to Earth; and praying and striving also, that your Father's will may be done there,—not his; and your Father's kingdom come there, and not his.

And finally, therefore, in St. George's name, I tell you, you cannot know God, unless also you know His and your adversary, and have no fellowship with the works of that Living Darkness, and put upon you the armour of that Living Light.

'Phrases,—still phrases,' think you? My friends, the Evil Spirit indeed exists; and in so exact

contrary power to God's, that as men go straight to God by believing in Him, they go straight to the Devil by disbelieving in Him. Do but fairly rise to fight him, and you will feel him fast enough, and have as much on your hands as you are good for. Act, then. Act—yourselves, waiting for no one. Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, to the last farthing in your own power. Whatever the State does with its money, do you that with yours. Bring order into your own accounts, whatever disorder there is in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's; then, when you have got the Devil well under foot in Sheffield, you may begin to stop him from persuading my Lords of the Admiralty that they want a new grant, etc., etc., to make his machines with; and from illuminating Parliament with new and ingenious suggestions concerning the liquor laws. For observe, as the outcome of all that is told you in this Fors, all taxes put by the rich on the meat or drink of the poor, are *precise* Devil's laws. That is why they are so loud in their talk of national prosperity, indicated by the Excise, because the fiend, who blinds them, sees that he can also blind you, through your lust for drink, into quietly allowing yourselves to pay fifty millions a year, that the rich may make their machines of blood with, and play at shedding blood.

But patience, my good fellows. Everything must be confirmed by the last, as founded on the first, of the three resolutions I asked of you in the beginning,—"Be sure you can obey good laws before

you seek to alter bad ones." No rattening, if you please; no pulling down of park railings; no rioting in the streets. It is the Devil who sets you on that sort of work. Your Father's Servant does not strive, nor cry, nor lift up His voice in the streets. But He will bring forth judgment unto victory; and, doing as He bids you do, you may pray as He bids you pray, sure of answer, because in His Father's gift are all order, strength, and honour, from age to age, for ever.

Of the Eastern question, these four little myths contain all I am able yet to say:—

I. St. George of England and Venice does not bear his sword for his own interests; nor in vain.

II. St. George of Christendom becomes the Captain of her Knights in putting off his armour.

III. When armour is put off, pebbles serve.

IV. Read the psalm 'In Exitu.'

LETTER LXXV

STAR LAW

VENICE, 1*st February*, 1877.

I AM told that some of my "most intelligent readers" can make nothing of what I related in last Fors, about St. Ursula's messages to me. What is their difficulty? Is it (1), that they do not believe in guardian angels,—or (2), that they do not think me good enough to have so great an angel to guard me,—or (3), that knowing the beginning of her myth, they do not believe in St. Ursula's personality?

If the first, I have nothing more to say;—if the second, I can assure them, they are not more surprised than I was myself;—if the third, they are to remember that all great myths are conditions of slow manifestation to human imperfect intelligence; and that whatever spiritual powers are in true personality appointed to go to and fro in the earth, to trouble the waters of healing, or bear the salutations of peace, can only be revealed, in their reality, by the gradual confirmation in the matured soul of what at first were only its instinctive desires, and figurative perceptions.

Oh me! I had so much to tell you in this Fors,

if I could but get a minute's peace;—my stories of the Venetian doggie, and others of the greater dog and the lesser dog—in Heaven; and more stories of Little bear in Venice, and of the Greater bear and Lesser bear in Heaven; and more of the horses of St. Mark's, in Venice, and of Pegasus and the chivalry of Heaven;—ever so much more of the selling of lemons in Venice, and of the twelve manner of fruits in Heaven for the healing of the nations. And here's an infernal paragraph about you, in your own Sheffield, sent me in a Lincoln paper by some people zealous for schools of art—poor fools!—which is like to put it all out of my head. Of that presently. I *must* try to keep to my business.

Well, the beginning of all must be, as quickly as I can, to show you the full meaning of the nineteenth Psalm. "Cœli enarrant;" the heavens declare—or make clear—the honour of God; which I suppose, in many a windy oratorio, this spring, will be loudly declared by basses and tenors, to tickle the ears of the public, who don't believe one word of the song all the while!

But it is a true song, none the less; and you must try to understand it before we come to anything else; for these Heavens, so please you, are the real roof, as the earth is the real floor, of God's house for you here, rentless, by His Law. That word 'cœli,' in the first words of the Latin psalm, means the 'hollow place.' It is the great space, or, as we conceive it, vault, of Heaven. It shows

the glory of God in the existence of the light by which we live. All force is from the sun.

The firmament is the ordinance of the clouds and sky of the world.* It shows the handiwork of God. He daily paints that for you; constructs, as He paints,—beautiful things, if you will look,—terrible things, if you will think. Fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind, (cyclone and other) fulfilling His Word. The Word of God, printed in very legible type of gold on lapis-lazuli, needing no translation of yours, no colporteurship. There is no speech nor language where *their* voice is not heard. Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their word to the ends of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the Sun, the Lord of Physical Life; in them also, a tabernacle for the Sun of Justice, the Lord of Spiritual Life. And the light of this Sun of the Spirit is divided into this measured Iris of colours:—

I. THE LAW OF THE LORD. Which is perfect, converting the soul.

That is the constant law of creation, which breathes life into matter, soul into life.

II. THE TESTIMONIES OF THE LORD. Which are sure,—making wise the simple.

These are what He has told us of His law, by the lips of the prophets,—from Enoch, the seventh from Adam, by Moses, by Hesiod, by David, by

* See 'Modern Painters,' in various places.

Elijah, by Isaiah, by the Delphic Sibyl, by Dante, by Chaucer, by Giotto. Sure testimonies all; their witness agreeing together, making wise the simple —that is to say, all holy and humble men of heart.

III. The statutes of the Lord. Which are right, and rejoice the heart.

These are the appointed conditions that govern human life;—that reward virtue, infallibly; punish vice, infallibly;—gladsome to see in operation. The righteous shall be glad when he seeth the vengeance —how much more in the mercy to thousands?

IV. The commandment of the Lord. Which is pure, enlightening the eyes.

This is the written law—under (as we count) ten articles, but in many more, if you will read. Teaching us, in so many words, when we cannot discern it unless we are told, what the will of our Master is.

V. The Fear of the Lord. Which is clean, enduring for ever.

Fear, or faith,—in this sense one: the human faculty that purifies, and enables us to see this sunshine; and to be warmed by it, and made to live for ever in it.

VI. The judgments of the Lord. Which are true, and righteous altogether.

These are His searchings out and chastisements

of our sins; His praise and reward of our battle; the fiery trial that tries us, but is "no strange thing"; the crown that is laid up for all that love His appearing. More to be desired are they than gold;—(David thinks first of these special judgments)—Sweeter than honey, or the honeycomb;—moreover by them is Thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward. Then —pausing—"Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from the faults I know not, and keep me from those I know; and let the words of my lips, and the thoughts of my brain, be acceptable in thy open sight—oh Lord my strength, who hast made me,—my Redeemer, who hast saved."

That is the natural and the spiritual astronomy of the nineteenth Psalm; and now you must turn back at once to the analysis given you of the eighth, in Fors, May, 1875 (vol. iii. p. 86).

For as, in the one, David looking at the sun in his light, passes on to the thought of the Light of God, which is His law, so in the eighth Psalm, looking at the sun on his throne, as the ruler and guide of the state of Heaven, he passes on to the thoughts of the throne and state of man, as the ruler and light of the World: Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,—Thou has put all things under his feet,—beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl.

It is of this dominion in love over the lower creatures that I have to speak to-day: but I must

pause a moment to point out to you the difference between David's astronomy with his eyes, and modern astronomy with telescopes.*

David's astronomy with the eyes, first rightly humbles him,—then rightly exalts;—What is man that Thou so regardest him—yet, how Thou hast regarded! But modern astronomy with telescope first wrongly exalts us, then wrongly humbles.

First, it wrongly exalts. Lo and behold—we can see a dozen stars where David saw but one; we know how far they are from each other; nay, we know where they will all be, the day after to-morrow, and can make almanacks. What wise people are we! Solomon, and all the Seven Sages of Greece,—where are they? Socrates, Plato, and Epaminondas—what talk you to us of them! Did they know, poor wretches, what the Dog Star smelt of?

We are generally content to pause at this pleasant stage of self-congratulation; by no means to ask further what the general conclusions of the telescope may be, concerning ourselves. It might, to some people, perhaps seem a deficiency in the telescope that it could discern no Gods in heaven; that, for all we could make out, it saw through the Gods, and out at the other side of them. Mere transparent space, where we thought there were houses, and gardens, and rivers, and angels, and what not. The British public does not concern

* Compare the whole of the lecture on Light, in 'Eagle's Nest.'

itself about losses of that nature: behold, there is the Universe: and here are we, the British public, in the exact middle of it, and scientific of it in the accuratest manner. What a fine state of things! Oh, proud British public, have you ever taken this telescopic information well into your minds; and considered what it verily comes to?

Go out on the seashore when the tide is down, on some flat sand; and take a little sand up into your palm, and separate one grain of it from the rest. Then try to fancy the relation between that single grain and the number in all the shining fields of the far distant shore, and onward shores immeasurable. Your astronomer tells you, your world is such a grain compared with the worlds that are, but that he can see no inhabitants on them, no sign of habitation, or of beneficence. Terror and chance, cold and fire, light struck forth by collision, desolateness of exploding orb and flying meteor. Meantime—you, on your grain of sand—what are you? The little grain is itself mostly uninhabitable; has a damp green belt in the midst of it. In that,—poor small vermin,—you live your span, fighting with each other for food, most of the time; or building—if perchance you are at peace—filthy nests, in which you perish of starvation, phthisis, profligate diseases, or despair. There is a history of civilization for you! briefer than Mr. Buckle's, and more true—when you see the Heavens and Earth without their God.

It is a fearful sight, and a false one. In what manner or way I neither know nor ask; this I know, that if a prophet touched your eyes, you might in an instant see all those eternal spaces filled with the heavenly host; and this also I know, that if you will begin to watch these stars with your human eyes, and learn what noble men have thought of them, and use their light to noble purposes, you will enter into a better joy and better science than ever eye hath seen.

> "Take stars for money—stars, not to be told
> By any art,—yet to be purchased."

I have nothing to do, nor have you, with what is happening in space, (or possibly may happen in time,) we have only to attend to what is happening here—and now. Yonder stars are rising. Have you ever noticed their order, heard their ancient names, thought of what they were, as teachers, 'lecturers,' in that large public hall of the night, to the wisest men of old? Have you ever thought of the direct promise to you yourselves, that you may be like them if you will? "They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, for ever and ever."

They that be *wise*. Don't think that means knowing how big the moon is. It means knowing what you ought to do, as man or woman; what your duty to your father is, to your child, to your neighbour, to nations your neighbours. A wise

head of the English Government for instance, (Oliver, had he been alive,) would have sent word, a year ago, to the Grand Signior, that if he heard a word more of 'atrocities' in Bulgaria after next week, he would blow his best palace into the Bosphorus. Irrespective of all other considerations, that was the first thing to be wisely said, and done, if needful. What *has* been said and *not* done, since,—the quantities of print printed, and talk talked, by every conceivable manner of fool,—not an honest syllable in all the lot of it, (for even Mr. Bright's true and rational statement—the only *quite* right word, as far as I can judge, I've seen written on the business,* that Russians had as much right to the sea, everywhere, as anybody else, was tainted by his party spirit,) I only wish I could show, in a heap of waste paper, to be made a bonfire of on Snowdon top.

That, I repeat, was the one simple, knightly, English-hearted thing to be done; and so far as the 'Interests of England' are concerned, her first interest was in this, to *be* England; and not a filthy nest of tax-gatherers and horse-dealers. For the horse-dealer and the man-dealer are alike ignoble persons, and their interests are of little

* I do not venture to speak of the general statements in my master Carlyle's letter; but it seemed to me to dwell too much on the idea of total destruction to the Turk, and to involve considerations respecting the character of Turk and Russian not properly bearing on the business. It is not, surely, 'the Eastern Question' whether Turkey shall exist, or Russia triumph, but whether we shall or shall not stop a man in a turban from murdering a Christian.

consequence. But the horse-rider and the man-ruler, which was England's ancient notion of a man, and Venice's also, (of which, in abrupt haste, but true sequence, I must now speak,) have interests of a higher kind. But, if you would well understand what I have next to tell you, you must first read the opening chapter of my little Venetian guide, 'St. Mark's Rest,' which will tell you something of the two piazzetta shafts, of which there are now photographs at St. George's Museum; and my Venetian readers, on the other hand, must have this Fors, to tell them the meaning of the statues on the top of said pillars.

These are, in a manner, her Jacob's pillars, set up for a sign that God was with her. And she put on one of them the symbol of her standard-bearer, St. Mark; and on the other, the statue of 'St. Theodore,' whose body, like St. Mark's, she had brought home as one of her articles of commercial wealth; and whose legend—what was it, think you?—What Evangel or Gospel is this, to be put level with St. Mark's, as the banner on the other wing of the Venetian Host?

Well, briefly, St. Mark is their standard-bearer in the war of their spirit against all spiritual evil; St. Theodore their standard-bearer in the war of their body against material and fleshly evil:—not the evil of sin, but of *material malignant force*. St. Michael is the angel of war against the dragon of sin; but St. Theodore, who also is not merely a saint, but an angel, is the angel of noble fleshly

life in man and animals, leading both against base and malignant life in men and animals. He is the Chevalier, or Cavalier, of Venice,—her first of loving knights, in war against all baseness, all malignity; in the deepest sense, St. Theodore, literally 'God gift,' is Divine life in nature; Divine Life in the flesh of the animal, and in the substance of the wood and of the stone, contending with poison and death in the animal,—with rottenness in the tree, and in the stone. He is first seen, (I can find no account of his birth,) in the form of a youth of extreme beauty; and his first contest is with a dragon very different from St. George's; and it is fought in another manner. So much of the legend I must give you in Venice's own words, from her Mother-Rule of St. Theodore,—the Rule, from the thirteenth century down, of her chief Club, or School, of knights and gentlemen. But meditate a little while first on that Venetian word "Mother-Law." You were told, some time since, by an English lawyer, that it was not a lawyer's business to make laws. He spoke truth—not knowing what he said. It is only God's business to make laws. None other's than His ever were made, or will be. And it is lawyer's business to read and enforce the same; however laughable such notion of this function may be to the persons bearing present name of lawyer.* I walked with

* Compare 'Unto this Last,' in the note, significant of all my future work, at page 78. (I am about to republish this book page for page in its first form.)

one of these—the Recorder of London—to and fro beside a sweet river bank in South England, a year ago; he discoursing of his work for public benefit. He was employed, at that time, in bringing before Parliament, in an acceptably moderate form, the demand of the Railroad Companies to tax the English people to the extent of six millions, as payment for work they had expected to have to do; and were *not* to do.

A motherly piece of law, truly! many such Mariegolas your blessed English liberties provide you with! All the while, more than mother, "for she *may* forget, yet will I not forget thee"—your loving Lord in Heaven pleads with you in the everlasting law, of which all earthly law, that shall ever stand, is part; lovable, infinitely; binding, as the bracelet upon the arm as the shield upon the neck; covering, as the hen gathereth her brood under her wings; guiding, as the nurse's hand the tottering step; ever watchful, merciful, life-giving; Mariegola to the souls,—and to the dust,—of all the world.

This of St. Theodore's was first written, in visible letters for men's reading, here at Venice, in the year 1258. "At which time we all, whose names are written below, with a gracious courage, with a joyful mind, with a perfect will, and with a single spirit,*

* "Cum gratiosa mente, cum alegro anemo, cum sincera voluntate, et cum uno spirito, ad honor de lo santissimo salvador et signor nostro, misier Jesucristo et de la gloriosa verghene madoña senta maria soa mare."

So much of the dialect of Venice, in mid-thirteenth century, the reader may bear with; the 'men's' being kept in the Homeric

to the honour of the most holy saviour and lord sir Jesus christ, and of the glorious virgin

sense still, of fixed purpose, as of Achilles. It is pretty to see the word 'Mother' passing upon the Venetian lips into 'sea.'

* The precious mariegola from which these passages are taken was first, I believe, described by Mr. Edward Cheney, "Remarks on the Illuminated Manuscripts of the early Venetian Republic," page 13. Of the manuscript written in 1258 there remain however only two leaves, both illuminated: the text is a copy of the original one, written after 1400. Mr. Cheney's following account of the nature of the 'Schools' of Venice, of which this was the earliest, sums all that the general reader need learn on this subject:—

"Though religious confraternities are supposed to have existed at a much earlier period, their first *historical* mention at Venice dates from the middle of the thirteenth century. They were of various sorts: some were confined to particular guilds and callings, while others included persons of every rank and profession.

"The first object of all these societies was religious and charitable. Good works were to be performed, and the practices of piety cherished. In all, the members were entitled to receive assistance from the society in times of need, sickness, or any other adversity.

"The 'Confraternità Grandi,' (though all had the same object,) were distinguished by the quantity, as well as by the quality, of their members, by their superior wealth, and by the magnificence of the buildings in which they assembled; buildings which still exist, and still excite the admiration of posterity, though the societies to which they owed their existence have been dispossessed and suppressed.

"The 'Confraternità Piccole,' less wealthy, and less magnificently lodged, were not the less constituted societies, with their own rules and charters, and having their own chapel, or altar, in the church of their patron-saint, in the sacristy of which their 'mariegola' was usually preserved. Many of the confraternities had a temporal as well as a spiritual object, and those which were composed exclusively of members of the same trade regulated their worldly concerns, and established the rules by which the Brothers of the Guild should be bound. Their bye-laws were subject to the approval of the Government; they were stringent and exclusive, and were strictly enforced. No competition was allowed."

madonna saint mary his mother, and of the happy and blessed sir saint theodore, martyr and cavalier of God,—('martir et cavalier de dio')—and of all the other saints and saintesses of God," (have set our names,—understood,) "to the end that the above-said sir, sir saint theodore, who stands continually before the throne of God, with the other saints, may pray to our Lord Jesus christ that we all, brothers and sisters, whose names are underwritten, may have by his most sacred pity and mercy, remission of our minds, and pardon of our sins."

"Remission of mind" is what we now profess to ask for in our common prayer, "Create in me a clean heart, oh Lord, and renew a right spirit within me." Whereupon follow the stories of the contest and martyrdom of St. Theodore, and of the bringing his body to Venice. Of which tradition, this is the passage for the sake of which I have been thus tedious to you.

"For in that place there was a most impious dragon, which, when it moved, the earth trembled; when it came forth of its cave, whatsoever it met, it devoured.

"Then St. Theodore said in his heart, 'I will go, and of my Father's substance make sacrifice, against the most impious dragon.' So he came into the very place, and found there grass with flowers, and lighted down off his horse, and slept, not knowing that in that place was the cave of the dragon. And a kind woman, whose name was Eusebia, a Christian, and fearing God, while she passed, saw St. Theodore

sleeping, and went with fear, and took him by the hand, and raised him up, saying, 'Rise, my brother, and leave this place, for, being a youth, you know not, as I see, the fear that is in this place. A great fear is here. But rise quickly, and go thy way.' Then the martyr of Christ rose and said, 'Tell me, woman, what fear is in this place.' The maid-servant of God answered, saying, 'Son, a most impious dragon inhabits this place, and no one can pass through it.' Then St. Theodore made for himself the sign of the cross, and smiting on his breast, and looking up to heaven, prayed, saying, 'Jesus, the Son of the living God, who of the substance of the Father didst shine forth for our salvation, do not slack my prayer which I pray of thee, (because thou in battle hast always helped me and given me victory) that I may conquer this explorer of the Devil.' Thus saying, he turned to his horse, and speaking to him as to a man, said, 'I know that in all things I have sinned against thee, oh God, who, whether in man or beast, hast always fought with me. Oh thou horse of Christ, comfort thee, be strong like a man, and come, that we may conquer the contrary enemy.' And as the horse heard his master saying fiery (sacrificial) words, he stood, looking forth as with human aspect, here and there; expecting the motion of the dragon. Then the blessed Theodore with a far-sent voice cried, and said, 'Dragon, I say to thee, and give precept to thee in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, who is crucified for the human race, that

thou shouldest come out of thy place, and come to me.' Instantly as he heard the voice of St. Theodore, he prepared himself that he should go out to him. And he moving himself and raging, presently in that place the stones were moved, and the earth trembled. . . . Then the blessed Theodore, as he saw him moving himself in his fury, mounted his horse, and trampled him down, and the horse, giving a leap, rose over the most impious dragon, trampling it down with all its four feet. Then the most strong martyr of Christ, St. Theodore, extending his lance, struck it through the heart, and it lay stretched out dead."

VENICE, *Purification of the Virgin*, 1877.

Oh me, again, how am I ever to tell you the infinite of meaning in this all-but-forgotten story? It is eleven years to-day since the 2nd of February became a great festival to me: now, like all the days of all the years, a shadow; deeper, this, in beautiful shade. The sun has risen cloudless, and I have been looking at the light of it on the edges of St. Ursula's flower, which is happy with me, and has four buds bursting, and one newly open flower, which the first sunbeams filled with crimson light down under every film of petal; whose jagged edges of paler rose broke over and over each other, tossed here and there into crested flakes of petal foam, as if the Adriatic breakers had all been changed into crimson leaves at the feet of Venice-Aphrodite. And my dear old Chamouni guide, Joseph Coutet,

is dead ; he who said of me "le pauvre enfant,—il ne sait pas vivre" and (another time) he would give me nine sous a day, to keep cows, as that was all I was worth, for aught he could see. Captain of Mont Blanc, in his time,—eleven times up it, before Alpine clubs began ; like to have been left in a crevasse of the Grand Plateau, where three of his mates were left, indeed ; he, fourth of the line, under Dr. Hamel, just brought out of the avalanche-snow breathing. Many a merry walk he took me in his onward years—fifty-five or so, thirty years ago. Clear in heart and mind to the last, if you let him talk ; wandering a little if you wanted him to listen ; —I've known younger people with somewhat of that weakness. And so, he took to his bed, and—ten days ago, as I hear, said, one evening, to his daughter Judith, "Bon soir, je pars pour l'autre monde," and so went. And thinking of him, and of others now in that other world, this story of St. Theodore, which is only of the Life in this, seems partly comfortless. "Life in nature." There's another dead friend, now, to think of, who could have taught us much, James Hinton ; gone, he also, and we are here with guides of the newest, mostly blind, and proud of finding their way always with a stick. If they trusted in their dogs, one would love them a little for their dogs' sakes. But they only vivisect their dogs.

If I don't tell you my tale of the Venetian doggie at once, it's all over with it. How so much love and life can be got into a little tangle of floss silk,

St. Theodore knows; not I; and its master is one of the best servants in this world, to one of the best masters. It was to be drowned, soon after its eyes had opened to the light of sea and sky,—a poor worthless wet flake of floss silk it had like to have been, presently. Toni pitied it, pulled it out of the water, bought it for certain sous, brought it home under his arm. What it learned out of his heart in that half-hour, again, St. Theodore knows; —but the mute spiritual creature has been his own, verily, from that day, and only lives for him. Toni, being a pious Toni as well as a pitiful, went this last autumn, in his holiday, to see the Pope; but did not think of taking the doggie with him, (who, St. Theodore would surely have said, ought to have seen the Pope too). Whereupon, the little silken mystery wholly refused to eat. No coaxing, no tempting, no nursing, would cheer the desolate-minded thing from that sincere fast. It would drink a little, and was warmed and medicined as best might be. Toni came back from Rome in time to save it; but it was not its gay self again for many and many a day after; the terror of such loss, as yet again possible, weighing on the reviving mind, (stomach, supposably, much out of order also). It greatly dislikes getting itself wet; for, indeed, the tangle of its mortal body takes half a day to dry; some terror and thrill of uncomprehended death, perhaps, remaining on it, also,—who knows? but once, after this terrible Roman grief, running along the quay cheerfully beside rowing Toni, it saw him

turn the gondola's head six feet aside, as if going away. The dog dashed into the water like a mad thing. "See, now, if aught but death part thee and me."

Indistinguishable, doubtless, in its bones from a small wolf: according to Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins; but much distinguishable, by St. Theodore's theology, telling of God, down, thus far at least, in nature. Emmanuel, — with us; in Raphael, in Tobias, in all loving and lowly things; "the young man's dog went with them."

And in those Adriatic breakers, anger-fringed, is He also?—Effice, queso, fretum, Raphael reverende, quietum.* And in the Dragons also, as in the deeps? Where is the battle to begin? How far down in the darkness lies this enemy, for whom Hell beneath is moved at the sound of his coming?

I must not keep you longer with mythic teaching to-day; but may briefly tell you that this dragon is the 'Rahab' in the 86th Psalm; the crocodile, spiritually named for the power of Egypt, with that of Babylon. Look in the indices of Fors for the word "Crocodile," and remember that the lifted cobra is the crest of the Egyptian Kings, as the living crocodile their idol. Make what you can out of that, till I have more time to tell you of Egyptian animal and herb gods; meantime, for the practical issue of all this.

I have told you the wealth of the world consists, for one great article, in its useful animals.

* Engraved above the statue of Raphael on the Ducal Palace.

How to get the most you can of those, and the most serviceable?

"Rob the squires' stables, to begin with?"

No, good friends,—no. Their stables have been to them as the first wards of Hell, locked on them in this life, for these three hundred years. But you must not open them that way, even for their own sakes.

"Poach the squires' game?"

No, good friends,—no. Down among the wild en'mies, the dust of many a true English keeper forbids you that form of theft, for ever.

"Poison the squires' hounds, and keep a blood bull terrier?"

Worse and worse—merry men, all.

No—here's the beginning. Box your own lad's ears the first time you see him shy a stone at a sparrow; and heartily, too; but put up, you and mother—(and thank God for the blessed persecution,)—with every conceivable form of vermin the boy likes to bring into the house,*—and go hungry yourselves rather than not feed his rat or his rabbit.

Then, secondly,—you want to be a gentleman yourself, I suppose?

Well, you can't be, as I have told you before, nor I neither; and there's an end, neither of us being born in the caste: but you may get some pieces of gentlemen's education, which will lead the way to your son's being a better man than you.

* See the life of Thomas Edwards; (abstract given in *Times* of January 22nd of this year).

And of all essential things in a gentleman's bodily and moral training, this is really the beginning—that he should have close companionship with the horse, the dog, and the eagle. Of all birthrights and bookrights—this is his first. He needn't be a Christian,—there have been millions of Pagan gentlemen; he needn't be kind—there have been millions of cruel gentlemen; he needn't be honest, —there have been millions of crafty gentlemen. He needn't know how to read, or to write his own name. But he *must* have horse, dog, and eagle for friends. If then he has also Man for his friend, he is a noble gentleman; and if God for his Friend, a king. And if, being honest, being kind, and having God and Man for his friends, he *then* gets these three brutal friends, besides his angelic ones, he is perfect in earth, as for heaven. For, to be his friends, these must be brought up with him, and he with them. Falcon on fist, hound at foot, and horse part of himself—Eques, Ritter, Cavalier, Chevalier.

Yes;—horse and dog you understand the good of; but what's the good of the falcon, think you?

To be friends with the falcon must mean that you love to see it soar; that is to say, you love fresh air and the fields. Farther, when the Law of God is understood, you will like better to see the eagle free than the jessed hawk. And to preserve your eagles' nests, is to be a great nation. It means keeping everything that is noble; mountains and floods, and forests, and the glory and honour of them, and all

the birds that haunt them. If the eagle takes more than his share, you may shoot him,—(but with the knight's arrow, not the blackguard's gun)—and not till then.

Meantime, for you are of course by no means on the direct way to the accomplishment of all this, your way to such wealth, so far as in your present power, is this: first, acknowledgment of the mystery of divine life, kindly and dreadful, throughout creation; then the taking up your own part as the Lord of this life; to protect, assist, or extinguish, as it is commanded you. Understand that a mad dog is to be slain; though with pity—infinitude of pity,—(and much more, a mad *man*, of an injurious kind; for a mad dog only bites flesh; but a mad man, spirit: get your rogue, the supremely maddest of men, with supreme pity always, but inexorably, hanged). But to all good and sane men and beasts, be true brother; and as it is best, perhaps, to begin with all things in the lowest place, begin with true brotherhood to the beast: in pure simplicity of practical help, I should like a squad of you to stand always harnessed, at the bottom of any hills you know of in Sheffield, where the horses strain;—ready there at given hours; carts ordered not to pass at any others: at the low level, hook yourselves on before the horses; pull them up too, if need be; and dismiss them at the top with a pat and a mouthful of hay. Here's a beginning of chivalry, and gentlemanly life for you, my masters.

Then next, take *canal* life as a form of 'university' education.

Your present system of education is to get a rascal of an architect to order a rascal of a clerk-of-the-works to order a parcel of rascally bricklayers to build you a bestially stupid building in the middle of the town, poisoned with gas, and with an iron floor which will drop you all through it some frosty evening; wherein you will bring a puppet of a cockney lecturer in a dress coat and a white tie, to tell you smugly there's no God, and how many messes he can make of a lump of sugar. Much the better you are for all that, when you get home again, aren't you?

I was going here to follow up what our Companion had told us* about the Hull 'keels'; and

* "The Humber keels are, in nearly all cases, the property of the men who go in them. They are house and home to the keel family, who never live on shore like other sailors. It is very easy work navigating the rivers. There's only the worry of loading and unloading,—and then their voyages are full of leisure.

"Keelmen are rural sailors, passing for days and days between cornfields and poppy banks, meadows and orchards, through low moist lands, where skies are grand at sunrise and sunset.

"Now all this evidently makes a happy joyous life, and the smart colours and decoration of the boats are signs of it. Shouldn't you say so? Well, then, independence, home, leisure, and nature are right conditions of life—and that's a bit of St. George's doctrine I've verified nearly all by myself; and there are things I know about keel folks besides, which quite warrant my conclusions. But to see these very lowly craft stranded low on the mud at low tide, or squeezed in among other ships—big and grimy things—in the docks, you would think they were too low in the scale of shipping to have any pride or pleasure in life; yet I really think they are little arks, dressed in rainbows. Remember,

to show you how an entirely refined life was conceivable in these water cottages, with gardens all along the shore of them, and every possible form of wholesome exercise and teaching for the children, in management of boat and horse, and other helpfulness by land and water; but as I was beginning again to walk in happy thought beside the courses of quiet water that wind round the low hill-sides above our English fields, — behold, the *Lincoln Gazette*, triumphant in report of Art-exhibitions and competitions, is put into my hand, —with this notable paragraph in it, which Fors points me to, scornful of all else:—

"A steam engine was used for the first time on Wednesday," (January 24th), "in drawing tram-cars through the crowded streets of Sheffield. The tramways there are about to dispense with the whole of their horses, and to adopt steam as the motive power."

And doubtless the Queen will soon have a tramway to Parliament, and a kettle to carry her there, and steam-horse guards to escort her. Meantime, my pet cousin's three little children have just had a Christmas present made to them of a real live Donkey; and are happier, I fancy, than either the Queen or you. I must write to congratulate them; so good-bye for this time, and pleasant drives to you.

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please, Humber keels are quite different things to barges of any kind. And now keels are off my mind—except that if I can ever get anybody to paint me a gorgeous one, I shall send it to you."

* * * * *

I can only answer provisionally an able and earnest letter [on the method of electing ministers in the Church of Scotland], for the evils which my correspondent so acutely feels, and so closely describes, are indeed merely a minor consequence of the corruption of the motives, no less than the modes, of ordination, through the entire body of the Christian Churches. No way will ever be discovered of rightly ordaining men who have taken up the trade of preaching as a means of livelihood, and to whom it is matter of personal interest whether they preach in one place or another. Only those who have *left* their means of living, that they may preach, and whose peace follows them as they wander, and abides where they enter in, are of God's ordaining: and, practically, until the Church insists that every one of her ministers shall either have an independent income, or support himself, for his ministry on Sunday, by true bodily toil during the week, no word of the living Gospel will ever be spoken from her pulpits. How many of those who now occupy them have verily been invited to such office by the Holy Ghost, may be easily judged by observing how many the Holy Ghost has similarly invited, of religious persons already in prosperous business, or desirable position.

But, in themselves, the practices which my correspondent thinks so fatal, do not seem to me much more than ludicrous and indecorous. If a young clergyman's entire prospects in life depend, or seem to depend, on the issue of his candidature, he may be pardoned for endeavouring to satisfy his audience by elocution and gesture, without suspicion, because of such efforts, of less sincerity in his purpose to fulfil to the best of his power the real duties of a Christian pastor: nor can I

understand my correspondent's meaning when he asks, "Can twenty years undo the mischief of a day?" I should have thought a quarter of an hour's honest preaching next Sunday quite enough to undo it.

And, as respects the direct sin in the anxious heart of the poor gesticulant orator, it seems to me that the wanderings of thought, or assumptions of fervour, in a discourse delivered at such a crisis, would be far more innocent in the eyes of the Judge of all, than the consistent deference to the opinions, or appeals to the taste, of his congregation, which may be daily observed, in any pulpit of Christendom, to warp the preacher's conscience, and indulge his pride.

And, although unacquainted with the existing organization of the Free Church of Scotland, I am so sure of the piety, fidelity, and good sense of many of her members, that I cannot conceive any serious difficulty in remedying whatever may be conspicuously indecorous in her present modes of Pastor-selection. Instead of choosing their clergymen by universal dispute, and victorious acclaim, might not the congregation appoint a certain number of (may I venture to use the most significant word without offence?)—*cardinal*-elders, to such solemn office? Surely, a knot of sagacious old Scotchmen, accustomed to the temper, and agreeing in the theology, of their neighbours, might with satisfaction to the general flock adjudge the prize of Pastorship among the supplicant shepherds, without requiring the candidates to engage in competitive prayer, or exhibit from the pulpit prepared samples of polite exhortation, and agreeable reproof.

Perhaps, also, under such conditions, the former tenor of the young minister's life, and the judgment formed by his masters at school and college, of his

character and capacity, might have more weight with the jury than the music of his voice or the majesty of his action; and, in a church entirely desirous to do what was right in so grave a matter, another Elector might reverently be asked for His casting vote; and the judgment of elders, no less than the wishes of youth, be subdued to the final and faithful petition,

"Show whether of these two, *Thou* hast chosen."

LETTER LXXVI

OUR BATTLE IS IMMORTAL

VENICE, *Sunday, 4th March*, 1877.

"Μάχη δή, φαμέν, ἀθάνατός ἐστιν ἡ τοιαύτη. ξύμμαχοι δὲ ἡμῖν θεοί τε ἅμα καὶ δαίμονες, ἡμεῖς δ'αὖ κτήματα θεῶν καὶ δαιμόνων, φθείρει δὲ ἡμᾶς ἀδικία καὶ ὕβρις μετὰ ἀφροσύνης, σώζει δὲ δικαιοσύνη καὶ σωφροσύνη μετὰ φρονήσεως, ἐν ταῖς τῶν θεῶν ἐμψύχοις οἰκοῦσαι δυνάμεσι."

"WHEREFORE, our battle is immortal; and the Gods and the Angels fight with us: and we are their possessions. And the things that destroy us are injustice, insolence, and foolish thoughts; and the things that save us are justice, self-command, and true thought, which things dwell in the living powers of the Gods."

This sentence is the sum of the statement made by Plato in the tenth book of the Laws respecting the relations of the will of man to the Divine creative power. Statement which is in all points, and for ever, true; and ascertainably so by every man who honestly endeavours to be just, temperate, and true.

I will translate and explain it throughout, in due

time;* but am obliged to refer to it here hastily, because its introduction contains the most beautiful and clear pre-Christian expression at present known to me, of the law of Divine life in the whole of organic nature, which the myth of St. Theodore taught in Christian philosophy.

I give one passage of it as the best preface to the matters I have to lay before you in connection with our beginning of real labour on English land, (announced, as you will see, in the statement of our affairs for this month).

"Not, therefore, Man only, but all creatures that live and die, are the possessions of the Gods, whose also is the whole Heaven.

"And which of us shall say that anything in the lives of these is great, or little, before the Gods? for it becomes not those to whom we belong, best and carefullest of possessors, to neglect either this or that.

"For neither in the hands of physician, pilot, general, nor householder, will great things prosper if he neglect the little; nay, the stonemason will tell you that the large stones lie not well without the small: shall we then think God a worse worker

* For the present, commending only to those of my Oxford readers who may be entering on the apostleship of the Gospel of Dirt, this following sentence, with as much of its context as they have time to read:

"ὃ πρῶτον γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς αἴτιον ἁπάντων, τοῦτο οὐ πρῶτον ἀλλὰ ὕστερον ἀπεφήναντο εἶναι γεγονὸς οἱ τὴν τῶν ἀσεβῶν ψυχὴν ἀπεργασάμενοι λόγοι, ὃ δὲ ὕστερον πρότερον, ὅθεν ἡμαρτήκασι περὶ θεῶν τῆς ὄντως οὐσίας."

than men, who by how much they are themselves nobler, by so much the more care for the perfectness of all they do; and shall God, the wisest, because it is so easy to care for little things, therefore not care for them, as if He were indolent or weary?"

Such preface befits well the serious things I have to say to you, my Sheffield men, to-day. I had them well in my mind when I rose, but find great difficulty in holding them there because of the rattling of the steam cranes of the huge steamer, Pachino.

Now, that's curious: I look up to read her name on her bow—glittering in the morning sun, within thirty paces of me; and, behold, it has St. George's shield and cross on it;* the first ship's bow I ever saw with a knight's shield for its bearing. I must bear with her cranes as best I may.

It is a right omen, for what I have to say in especial to the little company of you, who are minded, as I hear, out of your steam-crane and all other such labour in Sheffield, pestilent to the enduring Sabbath of human peace on earth and goodwill towards men, to take St. George's shield for your defence in Faith, and begin truly the quiet work and war—his, and all the saints'—cleaving the wide "seas of Death, and sunless gulfs of Doubt."

* At least, the sharp shield of crusading times, with the simple cross on it—St. George's in form, but this the Italian bearing reversed in tincture, gules, the cross argent.

Remember, however, always that seas of Death must mean antecedent seas of Life; and that this voice, coming to you from the laureated singer of England, prophesying in the *Nineteenth Century*,* does truly tell you what state Britannia's ruled waves have at present got into under her supremely wise ordination.

I wonder if Mr. Tennyson, of late years, has read any poetry but his own; or if, in earlier years, he never read, with attention enough to remember, words which most other good English scholars will instantly compare with his somewhat forced—or even, one might say, steam-craned, rhyme, to 'wills,' "Roaring moon of—Daffodils." Truly, the nineteenth century altogether, and no less in Midsummer than March, may be most fitly and pertinently described as a "roaring moon": but what has it got to do with daffodils, which belong to lakes of Life, not Death? Did Mr. Tennyson really never read the description of that golden harbour in the little lake which my Companions and I have been striving to keep the nineteenth century from changing into a cesspool with a beach of broken ginger-beer bottles?

> "The waves beside them danced; but they
> Outdid the sparkling waves in glee.
> A poet could not but be gay
> In such a jocund company."

No steam-craned versification in that, you will observe, by the way; but simple singing for heart's

* The sonnet referred to begins, I hear, the periodical so named.

delight, which you will find to be the vital form of real poetry; disciplined singing, also, if it may be, but natural, all the while. So also architecture, sculpture, painting,—Sheffield ironwork. Natural to Sheffield,*—joyful to Sheffield, otherwise an entirely impossible form of poetry there. (Three enormous prolonged trumpetings, or indecent bellowings—audible, I should think, ten miles off—from another steamer entering the Giudecca, interrupt me again, —and you need not think that I am peculiar in sensitiveness: no decent family worship, no gentle singing, no connectedly thoughtful reading, would be possible to any human being under these conditions, wholly inevitable now by any person of moderate means in Venice. With considerable effort, and loss of nervous energy, I force myself back into course of thought.)

You don't, perhaps, feel distinctly how people can be joyful in ironwork, or why I call it 'poetry'?

Yet the only piece of good part-singing I heard in Italy, for a whole summer, was over a blacksmith's forge; (and there has been disciplined music, as you know, made of its sounds before now; and you may, perhaps, have seen and heard Mr. G. W. Moore as the Christy Blacksmith). But I speak of better

* All the fine work of man must be first instinctive, for he is bound to be a fine Animal—King of Animals; then, moral or disciplined, for he is bound to be a fine Spirit also, and King of Spirits. The Spirit power begins in directing the Animal power to other than egoistic ends. Read, in connection with last Fors, 'The Animals of the Bible,' by John Worcester, Boston, Lockwood and Brooke, 1875.

harmonies to be got out of your work than Handel's, when you come at it with a true heart, fervently, as I hope this company of you are like to do, to whom St. George has now given thirteen acres of English ground for their own; so long as they observe his laws.

They shall not be held to them at first under any formal strictness — for this is mainly their own adventure; St. George merely securing coign of vantage for it, and requiring of them observance only of his bare first principles—good work, and no moving of machinery by fire. But I believe they will be glad, in many respects, to act by St. George's advice; and, as I hope, truly begin his active work; of which, therefore, it seems to me now necessary to state unambiguously the religious laws which underlie the Creed and vow of full Companionship, and of which his retainers will, I doubt not, soon recognize the outward observance to be practically useful.

You cannot but have noticed—any of you who read attentively,—that Fors has become much more distinctly Christian in its tone, during the last two years; and those of you who know with any care my former works, must feel a yet more vivid contrast between the spirit in which the preface to 'The Crown of Wild Olive' was written, and that in which I am now collating for you the Mother Laws of the Trades of Venice.

This is partly because I am every day compelled, with increasing amazement, and renewed energy, to

contradict the idiotic teaching of Atheism which is multiplied in your ears; but it depends far more essentially on two vital causes: the first, that since Fors began, "such things have befallen me"* personally, which have taught me much, but of which I need not at present speak; the second, that in the work I did at Assisi in 1874, I discovered a fallacy which had underlain all my art teaching, (and the teaching of Art, as I understand it, is the teaching of all things,) since the year 1858. Of which I must be so far tedious to you as to give some brief account. For it is continually said of me, and I observe has been publicly repeated lately by one of my very good friends, that I have "changed my opinions" about painting and architecture. And this, like all the worst of falsehoods, has one little kernel of distorted truth in the heart of it, which it is practically necessary, now, that you, my Sheffield essayists of St. George's service, should clearly know.

All my first books, to the end of the 'Stones of Venice,' were written in the simple belief I had been taught as a child; and especially the second volume of 'Modern Painters' was an outcry of enthusiastic praise of religious painting, in which you will find me placing Fra Angelico, (see the closing paragraph of the book,) above all other painters.

But during my work at Venice, I discovered the gigantic power of Tintoret, and found that there

* Leviticus x. 19.

was a quite different spirit in that from the spirit of Angelico; and, analysing Venetian work carefully, I found, —and told fearlessly, in spite of my love for the masters,—that there was "no religion whatever in any work of Titian's; and that Tintoret only occasionally forgot himself into religion."—I repeat now, and reaffirm, this statement; but must ask the reader to add to it, what I partly indeed said in other places at the time, that only when Tintoret forgets himself, does he truly find himself.

Now you see that among the four pieces of art I have given you for standards to study, only one is said to be 'perfect,'—Titian's. And ever since the 'Stones of Venice' was written, Titian was given in all my art-teaching as a standard of perfection. Conceive the weight of this problem, then, on my inner mind—how the most perfect work I knew, in my special business, could be done "wholly without religion"!

I set myself to work out that problem thoroughly in 1858, and arrived at the conclusion—which is an entirely sound one, and which did indeed alter, from that time forward, the tone and method of my teaching,—that human work must be done honourably and thoroughly, because we are now Men;—whether we ever expect to be angels, or ever were slugs, being practically no matter. We *are* now Human creatures, and must, at our peril, do Human—that is to say, affectionate, honest, and earnest work.*

* This is essentially what my friend Mr. Harrison means (if he knew it) by his "Religion of Humanity,"—one which he will find,

Farther, I found, and have always since taught, and do teach, and shall teach, I doubt not, till I die, that in resolving to do our work well, is the only sound foundation of any religion whatsoever: and that by that resolution only, and what we have done, and not by our belief, Christ will judge us, as He has plainly told us He will, (though nobody believes Him,) in the Resurrection.

But, beyond this, in the year 1858, I came to another conclusion, which was a false one.

My work on the Venetians in that year not only convinced me of their consummate power, but showed me that there was a great *worldly* harmony running through all they did—opposing itself to the fanaticism of the Papacy; and in this worldly harmony of human and artistic power, my own special idol, Turner, stood side by side with Tintoret; so also Velasquez, Sir Joshua, and Gainsborough, stood with Titian and Veronese; and those seven men—quite demonstrably and indisputably giants in the domain of Art, of whom in the words of Velasquez himself, "Tizian z'e quel che porta la Bandiera,"—stood, as heads of a great Worldly Army, worshippers of Worldly visible Truth, *against* (as it seemed then to me), and assuredly distinct from, another sacred army, bearing the Rule of the Catholic Church in the strictest obedience, and headed by Cimabue, Giotto, and Angelico;

when he is slightly more advanced in the knowledge "of all life and thought," was known and acted on in epochs considerably antecedent to that of modern Evolution.

worshippers not of a worldly and visible Truth, but of a visionary one, which they asserted to be higher; yet under the (as they asserted—supernatural) teaching of the Spirit of this Truth, doing less perfect work than their unassisted opposites!

All this is entirely so; fact tremendous in its unity, and difficult enough as it stands to me even now; but as it stood to me then, wholly insoluble, for I was still in the bonds of my old Evangelical faith; and, in 1858, it was with me, Protestantism or nothing: the crisis of the whole turn of my thoughts being one Sunday morning, at Turin, when, from before Paul Veronese's Queen of Sheba, and under quite overwhelmed sense of his God-given power, I went away to a Waldensian chapel, where a little squeaking idiot was preaching to an audience of seventeen old women and three louts,* that they were the only children of God in Turin; and that all the people in Turin outside the chapel, and all the people in the world out of sight of Monte Viso, would be damned. I came out of the chapel, in sum of twenty years of thought, a conclusively *un*-converted man—converted by this little Piedmontese gentleman, so powerful in his organ-grinding, inside out, as it were. "Here is an end to my 'Mother-Law' of Protestantism anyhow!—and now—what is there left?" You will find what was left, as, in much darkness and sorrow

* Counted at the time;—I am not quite sure now if seventeen or eighteen.

of heart I gathered it, variously taught in my books, written between 1858 and 1874. It is all sound and good, as far as it goes: whereas all that went before was so mixed with Protestant egotism and insolence, that, as you have probably heard, I won't republish, in their first form, any of those former books.*

Thus then it went with me till 1874, when I had lived sixteen full years with 'the religion of Humanity,' for rough and strong and sure foundation of everything; but on that, building Greek and Arabian superstructure, taught me at Venice, full of sacred colour and melancholy shade. Which is the under meaning of my answer to the Capuchin (Fors, vol. iii. p. 141), that I was 'more a Turk than a Christian.' The Capuchin insisted, as you see, nevertheless that I might have a bit of St. Francis's cloak: which accepting thankfully, I went on to Assisi, and there, by the kindness of my good friend Padre Tini, and others, I was allowed, (and believe I am the first painter who *ever was* allowed,) to have scaffolding erected above the high altar, and therefore above the body of St. Francis which lies in the lower chapel beneath it; and thence to

* Not because I am ashamed of them, nor because their Art teaching is wrong: (it is precisely the Art teaching which I am now gathering out of the 'Stones of Venice,' and will gather, God willing, out of 'Modern Painters,' and reprint and reaffirm every syllable of:) but the Religious teaching of those books, and all the more for the sincerity of it, is misleading—sometimes even poisonous: always, in a manner, ridiculous: and shall not stand in any editions of them republished under my own supervision.

draw what I could of the great fresco of Giotto, "The marriage of Poverty and Francis."*

And while making this drawing, I discovered the fallacy under which I had been tormented for sixteen years,—the fallacy that Religious artists were weaker than Irreligious. I found that all Giotto's 'weaknesses,' (so called,) were merely absences of material science. He did not know, and could not, in his day, so much of perspective as Titian, —so much of the laws of light and shade, or so much of technical composition. But I found he was in the make of him, and contents, a very much stronger and greater man than Titian; that the things I had fancied easy in his work, because they were so unpretending and simple, were nevertheless entirely inimitable; that the Religion in him, instead of weakening, had solemnized and developed every faculty of his heart and hand; and finally that his work, in all the innocence of it, was yet a human achievement and possession, quite above everything that Titian had ever done!

'But what is all this about Titian and Angelico to you,' are you thinking? "We belong to cotton mills—iron mills;—what is Titian to *us!*—and to all men. Heirs only of simial life, what Angelico?"

* The drawing I made of the Bride is now in the Oxford schools, and the property of those schools, and King Alfred. But I will ask the Trustees to lend it to the Sheffield Museum, till I can copy it for you, of which you are to observe, please, that it had to be done in a dark place, from a fresco on a vaulted roof which could no more be literally put on a flat surface than the figures on a Greek vase.

Patience—yet for a little while. They shall both be at least something to you before St. George's Museum is six months older.

Meantime, don't be afraid that I am going to become a Roman Catholic, or that I am one, in disguise. I can no more become a *Roman*-Catholic, than again an Evangelical-Protestant. I am a 'Catholic' of those Catholics, to whom the Catholic Epistle of St. James is addressed—"the Twelve Tribes which are scattered abroad"—the literally or spiritually wandering Israel of all the Earth. The St. George's creed includes Turks, Jews, infidels, and heretics; and I am myself much of a Turk, more of a Jew; alas, most of all,—an infidel; but not an atom of a heretic: Catholic, I, of the Catholics; holding only for sure God's order to His scattered Israel,—"He hath shown thee, oh man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

'Humbly.'—Have you the least idea, do you think, my Sheffield friends, what humility means,—or have any of your dress-coated lecturers? Is not almost everything you are trying to do begun in pride, or in ambition? And for walking humbly with your God:—(*your's*, observe, and your Fathers', as revealed to you otherwise than a Greek's and *his* Fathers', or an Indian's and his Fathers'), have you ever taken the least pains to know what kind of Person the God of England once was? and yet, do you not think yourselves the cleverest of human

creatures, because you have thrown His yoke off, with scorn? You need not crow so loudly about your achievement. Any young gutter-bred blackguard your police pick up in the streets, can mock your Fathers' God, with the best of you.

"He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation—my Father's God, and I will exalt Him." You will find that to be an entirely salutary resolve of true humility; and I have no hope of any prosperity for you in this or any other undertaking, but as you set yourselves to recover, and reform, in truest sense, the Christian Faith you have been taught to spit on, and defile.

Which, that you may be able to do, you must learn it from the Catholic epistles; which are written to you Sheffielders as much as to any one else;—the Pauline epistles being only to special persons, and parts of them having no more help in them for *you*, than Jonah's message to Nineveh. But the Catholic epistles are directly addressed to you—every word vital for you; and the most vital of these is the one that is given in nearly the same words by two of the Apostles, Peter and Judas, (not Iscariot;) namely, II. Peter i. 19, to end of epistle, and the epistle of Jude entire, comparing it with his question and its answer, John xiv. 22.

For if you understand those two epistles, and that question and answer, you will understand the great scientific fact respecting, not the origin, but the existence, of species: that there is one species of Men on God's side—called to be Saints—elect—

precious; (but by no means limited to the horizon of Monte Viso) who have everything in Christ; and another on the side of the Prince of this world, whose spot is the spot of *His* Children—who have nothing in Christ.

And that you must belong, whether knowingly or not, to one of these armies; and are called upon, by St. George, now to ascertain which:—the battle being henceforth like to be sore between them, and between their Captain Archangels, whose old quarrel over the body of Moses is by no means yet decided.

And then you will also understand the definition of true Religious service, (*θρησκεία*) by St. James the Bishop, (which, if either Archdeacon Denison, or simpleton Tooth, or the stout British Protestant beadles of Hatcham, ever come to understand—as in God's good time they may, in Heaven—they will be a greatly astonished group of the Blessed, for some while,)—to wit, "Pure service, and undefiled, (even by its tallow-candle-dropping, if the candles are lighted for help of widows' eyes—(compare Fors, vol. i. p. 118)—before God, and the Father, (God, of the Spirits of all Flesh—and *our* Father, who know Him,) is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction, and to *keep himself unspotted from the world*," of whose spots, —leopard's, snake's, Ethiopian's, and fine lady's patches,—your anatomical Students, though dispensing knowledge only skin-deep, are too slightly cognizant; and even your wise Christian scarcely

can trace them from skin to clothes, so as to hate rightly "even the garment spotted by the Flesh."

Well, I must draw to an end, for I have no more time this month. Read, before next Fors time, that epistle of Jude with intense care. It sums all the Epistles, coming, by the order of the Fors which grouped the Bible books, just before the Apocalypse; and it precisely describes your worst —in verity, your only,—Enemies of this day; the *twice* dead people,—plucked up by the *roots*, having once been rooted in the Holy Faith of Christendom; but now, *filthy* dreamers, (apostles of the Gospel of Dirt, in perpetual foul dream of what man was, instead of reverence for what he is;) carried about of winds of vanity, (pitiful apothecaries' apprentices,) speaking evil of things they know not; but in the things they know naturally as brute beasts, in these, corrupting themselves; going in the way of Cain—(brother kingdom at war with brother, France and Germany, Austria and Italy)—running after the error of Balaam for reward; (the Bishop of Manchester—whom I finally challenged, personally and formally, through my Oxford Secretary, two months ago, not daring to answer me a word,—knowing that the city he rules over is in every business act of it in mortal sin, and conniving,—to keep smooth with it—he! and the Bishop of Peterborough, "neutral," in sleek consent to the son of Zippor's prayer—"Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all,") and perishing in the gainsaying of Kore, going down

quick into volcanic petroleum pit, in the gathering themselves against Lawgiver and Priest, saying, "Wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? the days of Kinghood and Priesthood are ended!"

A notable piece of the Word of God to you, this, if ye will receive it: and in this last clause of it, for us of St. George's Company, precisely imperative. You see that whole mysterious passage about the contest for the body of Moses, (first, I suppose, of our Christian worshipping of relics, though old Greek motive of sacredest battle), comes in to enforce the not speaking evil of Dignities. And the most fearful practical lessons in modern history are that the entire teaching of Mazzini, a man wholly upright, pure, and noble, and of subtlest intellectual power — Italian of the Italians, was rendered poisonous to Italy because he set himself against Kinghood; and the entire war of Garibaldi, a soldier of ten thousand, innocent and gentle and true, and of old Roman valour, was rendered utterly ruinous to Italy, by his setting himself against the Priesthood. For both King and Priest are for ever, after the Order of Melchizedek, and none that rise against them shall prosper: and this, in your new plannings and fancyings, my good Sheffielders, you will please take to heart, that though to yourselves, in the first confusion of things, St. George leaves all liberty of conscience consistent with the perfect law of liberty, (which, however, you had better precisely understand from James the

Bishop, who has quite other views concerning it than Mr. John Stuart Mill;—James i. 25; ii. 12, 13), so soon as you have got yourselves settled, and feel the ground well under you, we must have a school built on it for your children, with enforced sending of them to be schooled; in earliest course of which schooling your old Parish-church golden legend will be written by every boy, and stitched by every girl, and engraven with diamond point into the hearts of both,—

"Fear God. Honour the King."

A few of the Sheffield working-men who admit the possibility of St. George's notions being just, have asked me to let them rent some ground from the Company, whereupon to spend what spare hours they have, of morning or evening, in useful labour. I have accordingly authorized the sale of £1,200 worth of our stock, to be re-invested on a little estate, near Sheffield, of thirteen acres, with good water supply. The workmen undertake to St. George for his three per cent.; and if they get tired of the bargain, the land will be always worth our stock. I have no knowledge yet of the men's plans in detail; nor, as I have said in the text, shall I much interfere with them, until I see how they develope themselves. But here is at last a little piece of England given into the English workman's hand, and heaven's.

I am beginning, for the first time in my life, to admit some notion into my head that I am a great man. God knows at how little rate I value the little that is in me; but the maintaining myself now quietly against the contradiction of every one of my best friends, rising as it

does into more harmonious murmur of opposition at every new act to which I find myself compelled by compassion and justice, requires more than ordinary firmness: and the absolute fact that, being entirely at one in my views of Nature and life with every great classic author, I am yet alone in the midst of a modern crowd which rejects them all, is something to plume myself upon,—sorrowfully enough: but haughtily also. And now here has Fors reserved a strange piece of—if one's vanity were to speak—good fortune for me; namely, that after being permitted, with my friend Mr. Sillar's guidance, to declare again in its full breadth the great command against usury, and to explain the intent of Shakespeare throughout the 'Merchant of Venice' (see 'Munera Pulveris'), it should also have been reserved for me to discover the first recorded words of Venice herself, on her Rialto!—words of the ninth century,* inscribed on her first church, St. James of the Rialto; and entirely unnoticed by all historians, hitherto; yet in letters which he who ran might read:—only the historians never looked at the church, or at least, looked only at the front of it and never round the corners. When the church was restored in the sixteenth century, the inscription, no more to be obeyed, was yet (it seems) in reverence for the old writing, put on the gable at the back, where, an outhouse standing a little in the way, nobody noticed it any more till I came on it, poking about in search of the picturesque. I found it afterwards recorded in a manuscript catalogue of ancient inscriptions in Venice, in St. Mark's library (and as I write this page, Sunday, March 11th, 1877, the photograph I have had made of it is brought in to

* I have the best antiquarian in Venice as authority for this date —my own placing of them would have been in the eleventh.

me *). And this is the inscription on a St. George's Cross, with a narrow band of marble beneath—marble so good that the fine edges of the letters might have been cut yesterday.

On the cross—

"Be thy Cross, oh Christ, the true safety of this place." (In case of mercantile panics, you see.)

On the band beneath it—

"Around this temple, let the merchant's law be just—his weights true, and his agreements guileless."

Those, so please you, are the first words of Venice to the mercantile world—nor words only, but coupled with such laws as I have set before you—perfect laws of 'liberty and fraternity,' such as you know not, nor yet for many a day, can again learn.

It is something to be proud of to have deciphered this for you; and more to have shown you how you may attain to this honesty through Frankness. For indeed the law of St. George, that our dealings and fortunes are to be openly known, goes deeper even than this law of Venice, for it cuts at the root, not only of dishonesty, but of avarice and pride. Nor am I sorry that in myself submitting to it, my pride must be considerably mortified. If all my affairs had been conducted with prudence, or if my present position in the world were altogether stately, it might have been pleasant to unveil the statue of one's economy for public applause. But I scarcely think even those of my readers who least understand me, will now accuse me of ostentation.

My father left all his fortune to my mother and me: to my mother, thirty-seven thousand pounds † and the

* Now in the Sheffield Museum. † 15,000 Bank Stock.

house at Denmark Hill for life; to me a hundred and twenty thousand,* his leases at Herne and Denmark Hills, his freehold pottery at Greenwich, and his pictures, then estimated by him as worth ten thousand pounds, but now worth at least three times that sum.

My mother made two wills; one immediately after my father's death; the other—(in gentle forgetfulness of all worldly things past)—immediately before her own. Both are in the same terms, "I leave all I have to my son." This sentence, expanded somewhat by legal artifice, remains yet pathetically clear, as the brief substance of both documents. I have therefore to-day, in total account of my stewardship, to declare what I have done with a hundred and fifty-seven thousand pounds; and certain houses and lands besides. In giving which account I shall say nothing of the share that other people have had in counselling or mis-counselling me; nor of my reasons for what I have done. St. George's bishops do not ask people who advised them, or what they intended to do: but only what they did.

My first performance was the investment of fifty thousand pounds in 'entirely safe' mortgages, which gave me five per cent. instead of three. I very soon, however, perceived it to be no less desirable, than difficult, to get quit of these 'entirely safe' mortgages. The last of them that was worth anything came conveniently in last year. I lost about twenty thousand pounds on them, altogether.

In the second place, I thought it rather hard on my father's relations, that he should have left all his money to me only; and as I was very fond of some of them,

* I count Consols as thousands, forty thousand of this were in stocks.

indulged myself, and relieved my conscience at the same time, by giving seventeen thousand pounds to those I liked best. Money which has turned out to be quite rightly invested, and at a high interest; and has been fruitful to me of many good things, and much happiness.

Next I parted with some of my pictures, too large for the house I proposed to live in, and bought others at treble the price, the dealers always assuring me that the public would not look at any picture which I had seen reason to part with; and that I had only my own eloquence to thank for the prices of those I wished to buy.*

I bought next a collection of minerals (the foundation now of what are preparing Sheffield and other schools) for a stipulated sum of three thousand pounds, on the owner's statement of its value. It proved not to be worth five hundred. I went to law about it. The lawyers charged me a thousand pounds for their own services; gave me a thousand pounds back, out of the three; and made the defendant give me another five hundred pounds' worth of minerals. On the whole, a satisfactory legal performance; but it took two years in the doing, and caused me much worry; the lawyers spending most of the time they charged me for, in cross-examining me, and other witnesses, as to whether the agreement was made in the front or the back shop; with other particulars, interesting in a picturesque point of view, but wholly irrelevant to the business.

* Fortune also went always against me. I gave *carte-blanche* at Christie's for Turner's drawing of Terni (five inches by seven), and it cost me five hundred pounds. I put a limit of two hundred on the Roman Forum, and it was bought over me for a hundred and fifty, and I gnash my teeth whenever I think of it, because a commission had been given up to three hundred.

Then Brantwood was offered me, which I bought, without seeing it, for fifteen hundred pounds: (the fact being that I have no time to see things, and *must* decide at a guess; or not act at all).

Then the house at Brantwood, a mere shed of rotten timber and loose stone, had to be furnished, and repaired. For old acquaintance' sake, I went to my father's upholsterer in London, (instead of the country Coniston one, as I ought,) and had five pounds charged me for a footstool; the repairs also proving worse than complete rebuilding; and the moving one's chattels from London, no small matter. I got myself at last settled at my tea-table, one summer evening, with my view of the lake—for a net four thousand pounds all told. I afterwards built a lodge nearly as big as the house, for a married servant, and cut and terraced a kitchen garden out of the 'steep wood'*—another two thousand transforming themselves thus into "utilities embodied in material objects"; but these latter operations, under my own immediate direction, turning out approvable by neighbours, and, I imagine, not unprofitable as investment.

All these various shiftings of harness, and getting into saddle—with the furnishing also of my rooms at Oxford, and the pictures and universal acquisitions aforesaid—may be very moderately put at fifteen thousand for a total. I then proceeded to assist my young relation in business; with resultant loss, as before related, of fifteen thousand; of which indeed he still holds himself responsible for ten, if ever able to pay it; but one of the pieces of the private message sent me, with St. Ursula's on Christmas Day, was that I should forgive this debt

* 'Brant,' Westmoreland for steep.

altogether. Which hereby my cousin will please observe, is very heartily done; and he is to be my cousin as he used to be, without any more thought of it.

Then, for my St. George and Oxford gifts—there are good fourteen thousand gone—nearer fifteen—even after allowing for stock prices, but say fourteen.

And finally, you see what an average year of carefully restricted expense has been to me!—Say £5,500 for thirteen years, or, roughly, seventy thousand; and we have this—I hope not beyond me—sum in addition:—

Loss on mortgages	£20,000
Gift to relations	17,000
Loss to relations	15,000
Harness and stable expenses	15,000
St. George and Oxford	14,000
And added yearly spending	70,000
	£151,000

Those are the clearly stateable and memorable heads of expenditure—more I could give, if it were needful; still, when one is living on one's capital, the melting away is always faster than one expects; and the final state of affairs is, that on this 1st of April, 1877, my goods and chattels are simply these following:—

In funded cash—six thousand Bank Stock, worth, at present prices, something more than fifteen thousand pounds.

Brantwood—worth, certainly with its house, and furnitures, five thousand.

Marylebone freehold and leaseholds—three thousand five hundred.

Greenwich freehold—twelve hundred.

Herne Hill leases and other little holdings—thirteen hundred.

And pictures and books, at present lowest auction

prices, worth at least double my Oxford insurance estimate of thirty thousand: but put them at no more, and you will find that, gathering the wrecks of me together, I could still now retire to a mossy hermitage, on a little property of fifty-four thousand odd pounds; more than enough to find me in meal and cresses. So that I have not at all yet reached my limit proposed in 'Munera Pulveris'—of dying 'as poor as possible,' nor consider myself ready for the digging scenes in Timon of Athens. Accordingly, I intend next year, when St. George's work really begins, to redress my affairs in the following manner:—

First. I shall make over the Marylebone property entirely to the St. George's Company, under Miss Hill's superintendence always. I have already had the value of it back in interest, and have no business now to keep it any more.

Secondly. The Greenwich property was my father's, and I am sure he would like me to keep it. I shall keep *it* therefore; and in some way, make it a Garden of Tuileries, honourable to my father, and to the London he lived in.

Thirdly. Brantwood I shall keep, to live upon, with its present servants—necessary, all, to keep it in good order; and to keep me comfortable, and fit for my work. I may not be able to keep quite so open a house there as I have been accustomed to do: that remains to be seen.

Fourthly. My Herne Hill leases and little properties that bother me, I shall make over to my pet cousin—whose children, and their donkey, need good supplies of bread and butter, and hay: she always promising to keep my old nursery for a lodging to me, when I come to town.

Fifthly. Of my ready cash, I mean to spend to the close of this year, another three thousand pounds, in amusing myself—with such amusement as is yet possible to me—at Venice, and on the Alps, or elsewhere; and as, at the true beginning of St. George's work, I must quit myself of usury and the Bank of England, I shall (at some loss you will find, on estimate) then buy for myself twelve thousand of Consols stock, which, if the nation hold its word, will provide me with three hundred and sixty pounds a-year—the proper degrees of the annual circle, according to my estimate, of a bachelor gentleman's proper income, on which, if he cannot live, he deserves speedily to die. And this, with Brantwood strawberries and cream, I will for my own poor part, undertake to live upon, uncomplainingly, as Master of St. George's Company,—*or* die. But, for my dependants, and customary charities, further provision must be made; or such dependencies and charities must end. Virtually, I should then be giving away the lives of these people to St. George, and not my own.

Wherefore,

Sixthly. Though I have not made a single farthing by my literary work last year,* I have paid Messrs. Hazell, Watson, and Viney an approximate sum of £800 for printing my new books, which sum has been provided by the sale of the already printed ones. I have only therefore now to *stop* working; and I shall receive regular pay for my past work—a gradually increasing, and—I have confidence enough in St. George and myself to say—an assuredly still increasing, income, on which I have no doubt I can sufficiently maintain all my present servants and pensioners; and

* Counting from last April fool's day to this.

perhaps even also sometimes indulge myself with a new missal. New Turner drawings are indeed out of the question; but as I have already thirty large and fifty or more small ones, and some score of illuminated MSS., I may get through the declining years of my æsthetic life, it seems to me, on those terms, resignedly, and even spare a book or two—or even a Turner or two, if needed—to my St. George's schools.

Now, to stop working *for the press*, will be very pleasant to me—not to say medicinal, or even necessary—very soon. But that does not mean stopping work. 'Deucalion' and 'Proserpina' can go on far better without printing; and if the public wish for them, they can subscribe for them. In any case, I shall go on at leisure, God willing, with the works I have undertaken.

Lastly. My Oxford professorship will provide for my expenses at Oxford as long as I am needed there.

Such, Companions mine, is your Master's position in life;—and such his plan for the few years of it which may yet remain to him. You will not, I believe, be disposed wholly to deride either what I have done, or mean to do: but of this you may be assured, that my spending, whether foolish or wise, has not been the wanton lavishness of a man who could not restrain his desires; but the deliberate distribution, as I thought best, of the wealth I had received as a trust, while I yet lived, and had power over it. For what has been consumed by swindlers, your modern principles of trade are answerable; for the rest, none even of that confessed to have been given in the partiality of affection, has been bestowed but in real self-denial. My own complete satisfaction would have been in buying every Turner drawing I could afford, and passing quiet days at Brantwood, between my garden and my gallery, praised, as I

should have been, by all the world, for doing good to myself.

I do not doubt, had God condemned me to that selfishness, He would also have inflicted on me the curse of happiness in it. But He has led me by other ways, of which my friends who are wise and kind, neither as yet praising me, nor condemning, may one day be gladdened in witness of a nobler issue.

LETTER LXXVII

THE LORD THAT BOUGHT US

VENICE, *Easter Sunday*, 1877.

I HAVE yet a word or two to say, my Sheffield friends, respecting your religious services, before going on to practical matters. The difficulties which you may have observed the School Board getting into on this subject, have, in sum, arisen from their approaching the discussion of it always on the hypothesis that there is no God: the ecclesiastical members of the board wishing to regulate education so as to prevent their pupils from painfully feeling the want of one; and the profane members of it, so as to make sure that their pupils may never be able to imagine one. Objects which are of course irreconcilable; nor will any national system of education be able to establish itself in balance of them.

But if, instead, we approach the question of school discipline on the hypothesis that there is a God, and one that cares for mankind, it will follow that if we begin by teaching the observance of His Laws, He will gradually take upon Himself the regulation of all minor matters, and make us feel and understand, without any possibility of doubt, how He would

have us conduct ourselves in outward observance. And the real difficulty of our Ecclesiastical party has of late been that they could not venture for their lives to explain the Decalogue, feeling that Modernism and all the practices of it must instantly be turned inside-out, and upside-down, if they did; but if, without explaining it, they could manage to get it *said* every Sunday, and a little agreeable tune on the organ played after every clause of it, that perchance would do, (on the assumption, rendered so highly probable by Mr. Darwin's discoveries respecting the modes of generation in the Orchideæ, that there *was* no God, except the original Baal-zebub of Ekron, Lord of Bluebottles and flyblowing in general; and that this Decalogue was only ten crotchets of Moses's, and not God's at all,)—on such assumption, I say, they thought matters might still be kept quiet a few years longer in the Cathedral Close, especially as Mr. Bishop was always so agreeably and inoffensively pungent an element of London society; and Mrs. Bishop and Miss Bishop so extremely proper and pleasant to behold, and the grass of the lawn so smooth shaven. But all that is drawing very fast to its end. Poor dumb dogs that they are, and blind mouths, the grim wolf with privy paw daily devouring apace, and nothing said, and their people loving to have it so, I know not what they will do in the end thereof; but it is near. Disestablishment? Yes, and of more powers than theirs; that prophecy of the Seventh from Adam is of judgment to be

executed upon all, and conviction of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed.

I told you to read that epistle of Jude carefully, though to some of you, doubtless, merely vain words; but to any who are earnestly thoughtful, at least the evidence of a state of the Christian Church in which many things were known, and preserved, (that prophecy of Enoch, for instance,) lost to us now; and of beliefs which, whether well or ill founded, have been at the foundation of all the good work that has been done, yet, in this Europe of ours. Well founded or not, at least let us understand, as far as we may, what they were.

There are some points in the translation that might be more definite: here is the opening of it, in simpler, and in some words certainly more accurate, terms.

"Judas, the servant of Jesus Christ, and the brother of James, to all who are sanctified in God, and called and guarded in Christ.

"Pity, and Peace, and Love, be fulfilled in you.

"Beloved, when I was making all the haste I could to write to you of the common salvation, I was suddenly forced to write to you, exhorting you to fight for the faith, once for all delivered to the Saints.

"For there are slunk in among you certain men, written down before to this condemnation, insolent, changing the grace of God into fury, and denying the only Despot, God; and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

"And I want to put you in mind, you who know

this,—once for all,—that the Lord, having delivered His people out of the land of Egypt, in the second place destroyed those who believed not.

"And the Angels which guarded not their beginning, but left their own habitation, He hath guarded in eternal chains, under darkness, to the judgment of the great day."

Now this translation is certainly more accurate, in observing the first principle of all honest translation, that the same word shall be used in English, where it is the same in the original. You see I have three times used the word 'guarded.' So does St. Judas. But our translation varies its phrase every time; first it says 'preserved,' then 'kept,' and then 'reserved,'—every one of these words being weaker than the real one, which means guarded as a watch-dog guards. To 'reserve' the Devil, is quite a different thing from 'watching' him. Again, you see that, for 'lasciviousness,' I have written 'fury.' The word is indeed the same always translated lasciviousness, in the New Testament, and not wrongly, if you know Latin; but wherever it occurs, (Mark vii. 22; Ephesians iv. 19, etc.,) it has a deeper under-meaning than the lust of pleasure. It means essentially the character which "refuses to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely," which cannot be soothed, or restrained, but will take its own way, and rage its own rage,—alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them,—who, being *past feeling*, have given themselves over to

fury, (*animal* rage, carnivorousness in political economy,—competition, as of horses with swinging spurs at their sides in the Roman corso, in science, literature, and all the race of life,) to work *all* uncleanness,—(not mere sensual vices, but all the things that defile, comp. Mark vii. 22, just quoted,) with greediness;—then, precisely in the same furrow of thought, St. Jude goes on,—"denying the only Despot, God;" and St. Paul, "but ye have not so learned Christ—*if so be* that ye *have* heard Him, and been taught by Him"—(which is indeed precisely the point dubitable)—"that ye put off the old man," etc., where you will find following St. Paul's explanation of the Decalogue, to end of chapter (Eph. iv.), which if you will please learn by heart with the ten commandments, and, instead of merely praying, when you hear that disagreeable crotchet of Moses's announced, "Thou shalt not steal," "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this—crotchet," which is all you can now do,—resolve solemnly that you will yourselves literally obey, (and enforce with all your power such obedience in others,) the Christian answering article of Decalogue, "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth," you will, in that single piece of duty to God, overthrow, as I have said, the entire system of modern society, and form another in righteousness and true holiness, by no rage refusing, and in no cowardice denying, but wholly

submitting to, the Lord who bought them with a price, the only Despot, God.

For our present translation of the passage is finally better in retaining the Greek word 'Despot' here rather than 'Lord,' in order to break down the vulgar English use of the word for all that is evil. But it is necessary for you in this to know the proper use of the words Despot and Tyrant. A despot is a master to whom servants belong, as his property, and who belongs to his servants as their property. My *own* master, my *own* servant. It expresses the most beautiful relation, next to that of husband and wife, in which human souls can stand to each other; but is only perfected in the right relation between a soul and its God. "Of those whom thou gavest me—mine—I have lost none,—but the son of perdition." Therefore St. Jude calls God the *only* Despot. On the other hand, a Tyrant, Tyrannus, Doric for Cyrannus, a person with the essential power of a Cyrus, or imperial commander from whose decision there is no appeal, is a king exercising state authority over persons who do not in any sense belong to him as his property, but whom he has been appointed, or has appointed himself, to govern for general purposes of state-benefit. If the tyranny glow and soften into despotism, as Suwarrow's soldiers (or any good commanding officer's) gradually become his 'children,' all the better—but you must get your simple and orderly tyrant, or Cyrus, to begin with. Cyrus, first suppose, only over greengroceries—as above

recommended, in these gardens of yours, for which yesterday, 11th April, I sent our Trustees word that they must provide purchase-money. In which territory you will observe the Master of St. George's Company is at present a Tyrant only; not a Despot, since he does not consider you as St. George's servants at all; but only requires compliance with certain of his laws while you cultivate his ground. Of which, the fixing of standard quality for your shoe-leather, since I hear you are many of you shoemakers, will be essential: and on this and other matters of your business, you will look to our St. George's Companion, Mr. Somervell, for instruction; with this much of general order, that you are to make shoes with extremest care to please your customers in all matters which they ought to ask; by fineness of fit, excellence of work, and exactitude of compliance with special orders: but you are not to please them in things which they ought not to ask. It is *your* business to know how to protect, and adorn, the human foot. When a customer wishes you really to protect and adorn his or her foot, you are to do it with finest care: but if a customer wishes you to injure their foot, or disfigure it, you are to refuse their pleasure in those particulars, and bid them—if they insist on such *dis*-service—to go elsewhere. You are not, the smiths of you, to put horseshoes hot on hoofs; and you are not, the shoemakers of you, to make any shoes with high heels, or with vulgar and useless decorations, or—if made to measure

—that will pinch the wearer. People who wish to be pinched must find torturers off St. George's ground.

I expected, before now, to have had more definite statements as to the number of families who are associated in this effort. I hope that more are united in it than I shall have room for, but probably the number asking to lease St. George's ground will be greatly limited, both by the interferences with the modes of business just described, and by the law of openness in accounts. Every tradesman's books on St. George's ground must always be open on the Master's order, and not only his business position entirely known, but his *profits* known to the public: the prices of all articles of general manufacture being printed with the percentages to every person employed in their production or sale.

I have already received a letter from a sensible person interested in the success of our schemes, "fearing that people will not submit to such inquisition." Of course they will not; if they would, St. George's work would be soon done. If he can end it any day these hundred years, he will have fought a good fight.

But touching this matter of episcopal inquiry, here in Venice, who was brought up in her youth under the strictest watch of the Primates of Aquileia—eagle-eyed, I may as well say what is to be in Fors finally said.

The British soul, I observe, is of late years

peculiarly inflamed with rage at the sound of the words 'confession' and 'inquisition.'

The reason of which sentiment is essentially that the British soul has been lately living the life of a Guy Fawkes; and is in perpetual conspiracy against God and man,—evermore devising how it may wheedle the one, and rob the other. If your conscience is a dark lantern,—then, of course, you will shut it up when you see a policeman coming; but if it is the candle of the Lord, no man when he hath lighted a candle puts it under a bushel. And thus the false religions of all nations and times are broadly definable as attempts to cozen God out of His salvation at the lowest price; while His inquisition of the accounts, it is supposed, may by proper tact be diverted.

On the contrary, all the true religions of the world are forms of the prayer, "Search me, and know my heart; prove me, and examine my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

And there are, broadly speaking, two ways in which the Father of men does this: the first, by making them eager to tell their faults to Him themselves, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee;" the second, by making them sure they cannot be hidden, if they would: "If I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there." In neither case, do the men who love their Father fear that others should hear their confession, or witness His inquisition. But those who hate Him, and perceive

that He is minded to make inquisition for blood, cry, even in this world, for the mountains to fall on them, and the hills to cover them. And in the actual practice of daily life you will find that wherever there is secrecy, there is either guilt or danger. It is not possible but that there should be things needing to be kept secret; but the dignity and safety of human life are in the precise measure of its frankness. Note the lovely description of St. Ursula,—Fors, November, 1876, (vol. iii. p. 441,)—learned and *frank* and fair. There is no fear for any child who is frank with its father and mother; none for men or women, who are frank with God.

I have told you that you can do nothing in policy without prayer. The day will be ill-spent, in which you have not been able, at least once, to say the Lord's Prayer with understanding: and if after it you accustom yourself to say, with the same intentness, that familiar one in your church service, "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open," etc., you will not fear, during the rest of the day, to answer any questions which it may conduce to your neighbour's good should be put to you.

Finally. You profess to be proud that you allow no violation of the sacredness of the domestic hearth. Let its love be perfect, in its seclusion, and you will not be ashamed to show the house accounts. I know—no man better—that an Englishman's house should be his castle; and an English

city, his camp; and I have as little respect for the salesmen of the 'ramparts of Berwick'* as for the levellers of the walls of Florence. But you were better and merrier Englishmen, when your camps were banked with grass, and roofed with sky, than now, when they are "ventilated only by the chimney;" and, trust me, you had better consent to so much violation of the secrecy of the domestic hearth, as may prevent you being found one day dead, with your head in the fireplace.†

Enough of immediate business, for to-day: I must tell you, in closing, a little more of what is being sent to your museum.

By this day's post I send you photographs of two fourteenth-century capitals of the Ducal Palace here. The first is that representing the Virtues; the second, that representing the Sages whose power has been greatest over men. Largitas, (Generosity,) leads the Virtues; Solomon, the Sages; but Solomon's head has been broken off by recent republican movements in Venice; and his teaching superseded by that of the public press —as "Indi-catore generale"—you see the inscription in beautiful modern bill type, pasted on the pillar.

Above, sits Priscian the Grammarian; and next

[* The work of Edward I., Robert Bruce, and Edward III. The keep had been destroyed to build the railway station on its site; and now the government offered to sell a considerable part of the wall to the Berwick Urban Sanitary Authority.—ED.]

† See vol. iii. p. 251.

to him, Aristotle the Logician: whom that in contemplating you may learn the right and calm use of reason, I have to-day given orders to pack, with extreme care, a cast of him, which has been the best ornament of my room here for some weeks; and when you have examined him well, you shall have other casts of other sages. But respecting what I now send,* observe, first,—

These capitals being octagonal, are composed each of sixteen clusters of leaves, opening to receive eight figure subjects in their intervals; the leaf clusters either bending down at the angles and springing up to sustain the figures, (capital No. 1,) or bending down under the figures and springing up to the angles, (No. 2;) and each group of leaves being composed of a series of leaflets divided by the simplest possible undulation of their surface into radiating lobes, connected by central ribs.

Now this system of leaf-division remains in Venice from the foliage of her Greek masters; and the beauty of its consecutive flow is gained by the observance of laws descending from sculptor to sculptor for two thousand years. And the hair which flows down the shoulders of Aristotle, and the divisions of the drapery of his shoulders and of the leaves of his book, are merely fourteenth-century forms of the same art which divided the

* Mr. Ward will always be able to provide my readers with copies of the photographs referred to in Fors; and will never send bad impressions; but I can only myself examine and sign the first four.

flowing hair of your Leucothea by those harmonious furrows. Of which you must now learn the structure with closer observance, to which end, in next Fors, we will begin our writing and carving lessons again.

LETTER LXXVIII

THE SWORD OF MICHAEL

VENICE, *9th May*, 1877.

I SEND to-day, to our Museum, a photograph of another capital of the Ducal palace—the chief of all its capitals: the corner-stone of it, on which rests the great angle seen in your photograph No. 3: looking carefully, you will easily trace some of the details of this sculpture, even in that larger general view; for this new photograph, No. 7, shows the same side of the capital.

Representing, (this white figure nearest us) LUNA, the Moon, or more properly the Angel of the Moon, holding her symbol, the crescent, in one hand, and the zodiacal sign Cancer in the other,—she herself in her crescent boat, floating on the tides,—that being her chief influence on Venice. And note here the difference between heraldic and pictorial symbolism: she holds her small crescent for heraldic bearing, to show you who she is; once that understood, her crescent boat is a *picturesque* symbol of the way her reflected light glides, and traverses, and trembles on the waves. You see also how her thin dress is all in waves; and the water ripples under her

boat so gaily, that it sets all the leaf below rippling too. The *next* leaf, you observe, does not ripple.

Next to the Angel of the Moon, is the Angel of the planet Jupiter,—the symbol of the power of the Father (Zeus, Pater) in creation. He lays his hand on the image of Man; and on the ledge of stone, under the iron bar above his head, you may decipher, beginning at the whitest spot on the exactly nearest angle,—these letters:

D (written like a Q upside down) E L I; then a crack breaks off the first of the three legs of M; then comes O, and another crack; then D S A D A (the A is seen in the light, a dancing or pirouetting A on one leg); then D E C O, up to the edge of Jupiter's nimbus; passing over his head, you come on the other side to S T A F O, and a ruinous crack, carrying away two letters, only replaceable by conjecture; the inscription then closing with A V I T 7 E V A. The figure like a numeral 7 is, in all the Ducal palace writing, short for E T, so that now putting the whole in order, and adding the signs of contraction hidden by the iron bar, we have this legend:

"DE LIMO DS ADĀ DE COSTA FŌ**AVIT
ET EVĀ;"

or, in full,

"De limo Dominus Adam, de costa formavit et Evam."

"From the clay the Lord made Adam, and from the rib, Eve."

Both of whom you see imaged as standing above the capital, in photograph No. 3.

And above these, the Archangel Michael, with his name written on the cornice above him—ĀCANGEL . MICHAEL; the Archangel being written towards the piazzetta, and Michael, larger, towards the sea; his robe is clasped by a brooch in the form of a rose, with a small cross in its centre; he holds a straight sword, of real bronze, in his right hand, and on the scroll in his left is written:

"ENSE
BONOS
TEGO
MALORV̄
CRIMINA
PURGO."

"WITH MY SWORD, I GUARD THE GOOD, AND PURGE THE CRIMES OF THE EVIL."

Purge—not punish; so much of purgatorial doctrine being engraved on this chief angle of the greater council chamber of the Senate.

Of all such inscription, modern Venice reads no more; and of such knowledge, asks no more. To guard the good is no business of hers now: 'is not one man as good as another?' and as to angelic interference, 'must not every one take care of himself?' To purify the evil;—'but what!—are the days of religious persecution returned, then? And for the old story of Adam and Eve,—don't we

know better than that!' No deciphering of the old letters, therefore, any more; but if you observe, here are new ones on the capital, more to the purpose. Your Modern Archangel Uriel—standing in the Sun—provides you with the advertisement of a Photographic establishment, FOTOGRAFIA, *this* decoration, alone being in letters as large, you see, as the wreath of leafage round the neck of the pillar. Another bill—farther round the shaft—completes the effect; and at your leisure you can compare the beautiful functions and forms of the great modern art of Printing, with the ancient rude ones of engraving.

Truly, it is by this modern Archangel Uriel's help, that I can show you pictures of all these pretty things, at Sheffield;—but by whose help do you think it is that you have no real ones at Sheffield, to see instead? Why haven't you a Ducal palace of your own, without need to have the beauties of one far away explained to you? Bills enough you have,—stuck in variously decorative situations; public buildings also—but do you take any pleasure in them? and are you never the least ashamed that what little good there may be in them, every poor flourish of their cast iron, every bead moulding on a shop front, is borrowed from Greece or Venice: and that if you got all your best brains in Sheffield, and best hands, to work, with that sole object, you couldn't carve such another capital as this which the photographer has stuck his bill upon?

You don't believe that, I suppose. Well,—you will believe, and know, a great deal more, of supreme serviceableness to you, if ever you come to believe and know that. But you can only come to it slowly, and after your "character" has been much "improved,"—as you see Mr. Goldwin Smith desires it to be.* To-day you shall take, if you will, a step or two towards such improvement, with Leucothea's help—white goddess of sea-foam, and the Sun-Angel's help—in our lesson-Photograph No. 1. With your patience, we will now try if anything 'is to be seen in it.'

You see at all events that the hair in every figure is terminated by severely simple lines externally, so as to make approximately round balls, or bosses, of the heads; also that it is divided into minute tresses from the crown of the head downwards; bound round the forehead by a double fillet, and then, in the headdress of the greater Goddess, escapes into longer rippling tresses, whose lines are continued by the rippling folds of the linen sleeve below.

Farther, one of these longer tresses, close behind the ear, parts from the others, and falls forward, in front of the right shoulder.

Now take your museum copy of my Aratra Pentelici, and, opposite page 53, you will find a woodcut,† giving you the typical conception of the

* In a speech at the opening of the Victoria Hall, Reading.

† I place copies of this cut in Mr. Ward's hands, for purchase by readers who have not access to Aratra.

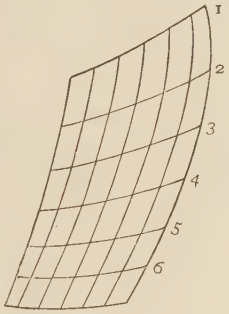
Athena of Athens at the time of the battle of Marathon. You see precisely the same disposition of the hair; but she has many tresses instead of one, falling in front of her shoulders; and the minute curls above her brow are confined by a close cap, that her helmet may not fret them. Now, I have often told you that everything in Greek myths is primarily a physical,—secondly and chiefly a moral —type. This is first, the Goddess of the air, secondly and chiefly, celestial inspiration, guiding *deed;* specially those two deeds of weaving, and righteous war, which you practise at present, both so beautifully, 'in the interests of England.'

Those dark tresses of hair, then, physically, are the dark tresses of the clouds;—the spots and serpents of her ægis, hail and fire;—the soft folds of her robe, descending rain. In her spiritual power, all these are the Word of God, spoken either by the thunder of His Power, or as the soft rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. Her spear is the strength of sacred deed, and her helmet, the hope of salvation.

You begin now to take some little interest in these ripplings of the leaves under the Venetian Lady of Moonlight, do not you? and in that strangely alike Leucothea, sedent there two thousand years before that peaceful moon rose on Venice; and that, four hundred years before our "Roaring moon" rose on *us.*

But farther. Take a very soft pencil, and touching very lightly, draw lines on the photograph

between the ripples of the hair, thus: and you will find that the distances 1–2, 2–3, 3–4, etc., first diminish gradually, and then increase;—that the lines 1, 2, 3, etc., radiate from the slope or the fillet, gradually, till they become horizontal at the shoulder; and lastly, that the whole group first widens and then diminishes, till the tress farthest back losing itself altogether, and the four nearest us hiding behind the shoulder, the fullest one, set for contrast besides the feeblest, dies away in delicate rippling over the shoulder line.



Now, sketch with a soft pencil such a little diagram of all this, as the figure above; and then, take your pen, and try to draw the lines of the curved tresses within their rectangular limits. And if you don't 'see a little more in' Leucothea's hair before you have done,—you shall tell me, and we'll talk more about it.

Supposing, however, that you do begin to see more in it, when you have finished your drawing, look at the plate opposite page 112 in Aratra, and read with care the six paragraphs 115–120. Which having read, note this farther,—the disorder of the composition of the later art in Greece is the sign of the coming moral and physical ruin of Greece; but through and under all her ruin, the art which submitted itself to religious law survived

as a remnant, unthought of, but immortal; and nourished its little flock, day by day, till Byzantium rose out of it, and then Venice. And that flowing hair of the Luna was in truth sculptured by the sacred power of the ghosts of the men who carved the Leucothea.

You must be patient enough to receive some further witness of this, before our drawing lesson ends for to-day.

You see that drapery at Leucothea's knee. Take a sheet of thin note-paper: fold it (as a fan is folded) into sharp ridges; but straight down the sheet, from end to end. Then cut it across, from corner to corner, fold either half of it up again, and you have the root of all Greek, Byzantine, and Etruscan pendent drapery.

Try, having the root thus given you, first to imitate that simple bit of Leucothea's, and then the complex ones, ending in the tasselled points, of Athena's robe in the woodcut. Then, take a steel pen, and just be good enough to draw the edges of those folds;—every one, you see, taken up in order duly, and carried through the long sweeping curves up to the edge of the ægis at her breast. Try to do that yourself, with your pen-point, and then, remember that the Greek workman did it with his brush-point, designing as he drew, and that on the convex surface of a vase,—and you will begin to see what Greek vases are worth, and why they are so.

Then lastly, take your photograph No. 10, which

is of a door of St. Mark's, with two prophets bearing scrolls, in the midst of vineleaf ornament on each side, and look at the drapery of the one on the left where it falls in the last folds behind his foot.

Athena's sacred robe, you see, still!—and here no vague reminiscence, as in the Luna, but absolutely pure Greek tradition, kept for two thousand years,—for this decoration is thirteenth century work, by Greek, not Venetian, artists.

Also I send other photographs, now completing your series to the twelfth, namely—

No. 8. Entire west front of St. Mark's, as it stood in the fifteenth century; from Gentile Bellini's picture of it.

No. 9. Entire west front, as it stands now.

No. 10. Northern of the five porches of the west front, as it is.

No. 11. Southern porch of the west front, as it is now.

No. 12. Central porch of the west front, as it is now. The greater part of this west front is yet uninjured, except by time, since its mosaics were altered in the sixteenth century. But you see that some pillars of the southern porch are in an apparently falling condition; propped by timbers. They were all quite safe ten years ago; they have been brought into this condition by the restorations on the south side, and so left: the whole porch was therefore boarded across the front of it during the whole of this last winter; and the boards used

for bill-sticking, like the pillars of the Ducal palace. I thought it worth while to take note of the actual advertisements which were pasted on the palings over the porch, on Sunday, the 4th of March of this year (see opposite page): two sentences were written in English instead of Italian by the friend who copied them for me.

Such are the modern sacred inscriptions and divine instructions presented to the Venetian people by their church of St. Mark. What its ancient inscriptions and perennial advertisements were, you shall read in 'St. Mark's Rest,' if you will, with other matters appertaining to ancient times.

With none others do I ask you to concern yourselves; nor can I enough wonder at the intense stupidity and obstinacy with which the public journals speak of all I am trying to teach and to do, as if I were making a *new* experiment in St. George's Company; while the very gist and essence of everything St. George orders is that it shall *not* be new, and not an 'experiment';* but the re-declaration and re-doing of things known and practised successfully since Adam's time.

Nothing new, I tell you,—how often am I to thrust this in your ears? Is the earth new, and its bread? Are the plough and sickle new in men's hands? Are Faith and Godliness new in

* The absurd endeavours of modern rhymesters and republicans with which St. George's work is so often confounded, came to water, because they *were* new, and because the rhyming gentlemen thought themselves wiser than their fathers.

CASA OMNIA

ED AGENZIE REUNITE,

For Information on all matters of Commercial Enterprise, Speculation, &c., &c.

SALA DI EVANGELIZZAZIONE,

CHIESA EVANGELICA,

Avra luogo una Pubblico Conferenza sul sequente soggetto.

LA VERA CHIESA.

VILLE DE NICE.

SOCIÉTÉ DE BEAUX ARTS.

EXPOSITION DE PEINTURE ET SCULPTURE.

SOCIETÀ NAZIONALE ITALIANA,

EMISSIONE 1866.

PRESTITO E PREMI.

Tickets 1 lira.

THOSE WHO BUY **10** WILL RECEIVE **11.**

DENTI.

NON PIÙ ESTRAZIONE, SICURA GUARIGIONE.

CALLE DEI SPECCHIERIE.

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10 *LIRE DI MANCIA.*

PERDUTA UNA

CAGNOLINA,

COLORE CANNELLA COLLE ORECCHIE PIUTOSTO LUNGE.

their hearts? Are common human charity and courage new? By God's grace, lasting yet, one sees in miners' hearts and sailors'. Your political cowardice is new, and your public rascality, and your blasphemy, and your equality, and your science of Dirt. New in their insolence and rampant infinitude of egotism—not new in one idea, or in one possibility of good.

Modern usury is new, and the abolition of usury laws; but the law of Fors as old as Sinai. Modern divinity with—not so much as a lump of gold—but a clot of mud, for its god, is new; but the theology of Fors as old as Abraham. And generally the modern Ten Commandments are new:—"Thou shalt have any other god but me. Thou shalt worship every beastly imagination on earth and under it. Thou shalt take the name of the Lord in vain to mock the poor, for the Lord will hold him guiltless who rebukes and gives not; thou shalt remember the Sabbath day to keep it profane; thou shalt dishonour thy father and thy mother; thou shalt kill, and kill by the million, with all thy might and mind and wealth spent in machinery for multifold killing; thou shalt look on every woman to lust after her; thou shalt steal, and steal from morning till evening,—the evil from the good, and the rich from the poor;* thou shalt live by

* Stealing by the poor from the rich is of course still forbidden, and even in a languid way by the poor from the poor; but every form of theft, forbidden and approved, is practically on the increase.

Just as I had finished writing this modern Decalogue, my

continual lying in million-fold sheets of lies; and covet thy neighbour's house, and country, and wealth, and fame, and everything that is his." And finally, by word of the Devil, in short summary, through Adam Smith, "A new commandment give I unto you: that ye hate one another."

Such, my Sheffield, and elsewhere remaining friends, are the developed laws of your modern civilization; not, you will find, whatever their present freshness, like to last in the wear. But the old laws (which alone Fors teaches you) are not only as old as Sinai, but much more stable. Heaven and its clouds, earth and its rocks, shall pass; but these shall not pass away. Only in *their* development, and full assertion of themselves, they will assuredly appear active in new directions, and commandant of new duties or abstinences; of which that simple one which we stopped at in last Fors,—"Let him that stole steal no more"—will be indeed a somewhat astonishing abstinence to a great many people, when they see it persisted in by others, and therefore find themselves compelled to think of it, however unwillingly, as perhaps actually some day imperative also on themselves.

When I gave you in Fors, vol. i. p. 72, the little

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gondolier, Piero Mazzini, came in for his orders. His daughter is, I believe, dying of a brain disease, which was first brought on by fright, when his house was broken into last year, and all he had in it carried off. I asked him what the new doctor said, knowing one had been sent for. The new doctor said "he had been called too late; but the girl must have a new medicine, which would cost a franc the dose."

sketch of the pillaging of France by Edward III. before the battle of Crecy, a great many of my well-to-do friends said, "Why does he print such things? they will only do mischief!"—meaning, they would open the eyes of the poor a little to some of the mistaken functions of kings. I had previously given, (early enough at my point, you see), that sketch of the death of Richard I., Fors, vol. i. p. 56, differing somewhat from the merely picturesque accounts of it, and Academy pictures, in that it made you clearly observe that Richard got his death from Providence, not as a king, but as a burglar. Which is a point to be kept in mind when you happen any day to be talking about Providence.

Again. When Mr. Greg so pleasantly showed in the *Contemporary Review* how benevolent the rich were in drinking champagne, and how wicked the poor were in drinking beer, you will find that in Fors, Letter LX., I requested him to supply the point of economical information which he had inadvertently overlooked,—how the champagne drinker had *got* his champagne. The poor man, drunk in an ungraceful manner though he be, has yet worked for his beer—and does but drink his wages. I asked, of course, for complete parallel of the two cases,—what work the rich man had done for *his* sparkling beer; and how it came to pass that *he* had got so much higher wages, that he could put them, unblamed, to that benevolent use. To which question, you observe, Mr. Greg has never ventured the slightest answer.

Nor has Mr. Fawcett, you will also note, ventured one word of answer to the questions put to him in Fors, October 4th, 1872, vol. i. p. 435; June 1st, 1872, p. 364; November 1st, 1871, p. 215; and to make sure he dared not, I challenged him privately, as I did the Bishop of Manchester, through my Oxford Secretary. Not a word can either of them reply. For, indeed, you will find the questions are wholly unanswerable, except by blank confessions of having, through their whole public lives, the one definitely taught, and the other, in cowardice, permitted the acceptance of, the great Devil's law of Theft by the Rich from the Poor, in the two terrific forms either of buying men's tools, and making them pay for the loan of them—(Interest) —or buying men's lands, and making them pay for the produce of them—(Rent). And it is the abstinence from these two forms of theft, which St. Paul first requires of every Christian, in saying, "Let him that stole, steal no more."

And in this point, your experiment at Sheffield *is* a new one. It will be the first time, I believe, in which the landlord, (St. George's Company, acting through its Master,) takes upon himself the Ruler's unstained authority,—the literal function of the Shepherd who is *no* Hireling, and who *does* care for the sheep: and not count them only for their flesh and fleece. And if you will look back to the last chapter of 'Munera Pulveris,' and especially to its definition of Royal Mastership,—or the King's, as separated from the Hireling's, or Usurer's,

pp. 159–60; and read what follows of Mastership expectant of Death, p. 165,—you will see both what kind of laws you will live under; and also how long these had been determined in my mind, before I had the least thought of being forced myself to take any action in their fulfilment. For indeed I knew not, till this very last year in Venice, whether some noble of England might not hear and understand in time, and take upon himself Mastership and Captaincy in this sacred war: but final sign has just been given me that this hope is vain; and on looking back over the preparations made for all these things in former years—I see it must be my own task, with such strength as may be granted me, to the end. For in rough approximation of date nearest to the completion of the several pieces of my past work, as they are built one on the other, —at twenty, I wrote 'Modern Painters'; at thirty, 'The Stones of Venice'; at forty, 'Unto this Last'; at fifty, the Inaugural Oxford lectures; and—if 'Fors Clavigera' is ever finished as I mean—it will mark the mind I had at sixty; and leave me in my seventh day of life, perhaps—to rest. For the code of all I had to teach will then be, in form, as it is at this hour, in substance, completed. 'Modern Painters' taught the claim of all lower nature on the hearts of men; of the rock, and wave, and herb, as a part of their necessary spirit life; in all that I now bid you to do, to dress the earth and keep it, I am fulfilling what I then began.

The 'Stones of Venice' taught the laws of

constructive Art, and the dependence of all human work or edifice, for its beauty, on the happy life of the workman. 'Unto this Last' taught the laws of that life itself, and its dependence on the Sun of Justice: the Inaugural Oxford lectures, the necessity that it should be led, and the gracious laws of beauty and labour recognized, by the upper, no less than the lower, classes of England; and lastly 'Fors Clavigera' has declared the relation of these to each other, and the only possible conditions of peace and honour, for low and high, rich and poor, together, in the holding of that first Estate, under the only Despot, God, from which whoso falls, angel or man, is kept, not mythically nor disputably, but here in visible horror of chains under darkness to the judgment of the great day: and in keeping which service is perfect freedom, and inheritance of all that a loving Creator can give to His creatures, and an immortal Father to His children.

This, then, is the message, which, knowing no more as I unfolded the scroll of it, what next would be written there, than a blade of grass knows what the form of its fruit shall be, I have been led on year by year to speak, even to this its end.

And now it seems to me, looking back over the various fragments of it written since the year 1860, 'Unto this Last,' 'Time and Tide,' 'Munera Pulveris,' and 'Eagle's Nest,' together with the seven years' volumes of 'Fors Clavigera,' that it has been

clearly* enough and repeatedly enough spoken for those who will hear: and that, after such indexed summary of it as I may be able to give in the remaining numbers of this last volume, I should set aside this political work as sufficiently done; and enter into my own rest, and your next needed service, by completing the bye-law books of Botany and Geology for St. George's schools, together with so much law of art as it may be possible to explain or exhibit, under the foul conditions of the age.

Respecting all these purposes, here are some words of Plato's, which reverently and thankfully adopting also for my own, I pray you to read thoughtfully, and abide by.

"Since, then, we are going to establish laws; and there have been chosen by us guardians of these laws, and we ourselves are in the sunset of life, and these guardians are young in comparison of us, we must at the same time write the laws themselves; and, so far as possible, make these chosen keepers of them able to write laws also, when there shall be need. And therefore we will say to them, 'Oh our friends, saviours of law, we indeed, in all matters concerning which we make law, shall leave many things aside unnoticed:

* The complaints of several of my friends that they cannot understand me lead me the more to think that I am multiplying words in vain. I am perfectly certain that if they once made the resolution that nothing should stay them from doing right when they once knew what the right was, they would understand me fast enough.

how can it be otherwise? Nevertheless, in the total system, and in what is chief of its parts, we will not leave, to the best of our power, anything that shall not be encompassed by strict outline, as with a painter's first determination of his subject within some exact limit. This line, then, that we have drawn round, it will be for you afterwards to fill. And to what you must look, and keep for ever in your view as you complete the body of law, it behoves you to hear. For, indeed, the Spartan Megillus, and the Cretan Clinias, and I, Athenian, have many a time agreed on this great purpose among ourselves; but now we would have you our disciples to feel with us also, looking to the same things to which we have consented with each other that the lawgiver and law-guardian should look. And this consent of ours was in one great sum and head of all purposes: namely, that a man should be made good, having the virtues of soul which belong to a man; and that whatever occupations, whatever disciplines, whatever possessions, desires, opinions, and instructions, contribute to this end, whether in male or female, young or old, of all that dwell together in our state, those, with all zeal, are to be appointed and pursued through the whole of life: and as for things other than such, which are impediments to virtue, that no soul in the state shall show itself as prizing or desiring them. And this shall be so finally and sternly established, that if it became impossible to maintain the city, so ordered, in the presence of its enemies, then its inhabitants should rather choose to leave their city for ever, and bear any hardship in exile, than submit to any yoke put on them by baser men, or change their legislation for any other which would make them baser themselves. This was the very head and front of all

that we consented in, to which we would, now, that you our disciples looking also, should praise or blame the laws we have made; such of them as have no real power to this noble end, reject; but such as contribute to it, salute; and affectionately receiving them, live in them; but to all other way of life leading to anything else than such good, you must bid farewell.'"

LETTER LXXIX

LIFE GUARDS OF NEW LIFE

HERNE HILL, 18*th June*, 1877.

SOME time since, at Venice, a pamphlet on social subjects was sent me by its author—expecting my sympathy, or by way of bestowing on me his own. I cut the following sentence out of it, which, falling now out of my pocket-book, I find presented to me by Fors as a proper introduction to things needing further declaration this month.

"It is indeed a most blessed provision that men will not work without wages; if they did, society would be overthrown from its roots. A man who would give his labour for nothing would be a social monster."

This sentence, although written by an extremely foolish, and altogether insignificant, person, is yet, it seems to me, worth preserving, as one of the myriad voices, more and more unanimous daily, of a society which is itself a monster; founding itself on the New Commandment, Let him that hateth God, hate his brother also.

A society to be indeed overthrown from its roots; and out of which, my Sheffield workmen, you are

now called into this very 'monstrosity' of labour, not for wages, but for the love of God and man; and on this piece of British ground, freely yielded to you, to free-heartedness of unselfish toil.

Looking back to the history of guilds of trade in England, and of Europe generally, together with that of the great schools of Venice, I perceive the real ground of their decay to have lain chiefly in the conditions of selfishness and isolation which were more or less involved in their vow of fraternity, and their laws of apprenticeship. And in the outset of your labour here on St. George's ground, I must warn you very earnestly against the notion of 'co-operation' as the policy of a privileged number of persons for their own advantage. You have this land given you for your work that you may do the best you can for *all* men; you are bound by certain laws of work, that the 'best you can' may indeed be good and exemplary: and although I shall endeavour to persuade you to accept nearly every law of the old guilds, that acceptance, I trust, will be with deeper understanding of the wide purposes of so narrow fellowship; and, (if the thought is not too foreign to your present temper,) more in the spirit of a body of monks gathered for missionary service, than of a body of tradesmen gathered for the promotion even of the honestest and usefullest trade.

It is indeed because I have seen you to be capable of co-operation, and to have conceived among yourselves the necessity of severe laws for its better

enforcement, that I have determined to make the first essay of St. George's work at Sheffield. But I do not think you have yet learned that such unity of effort can only be vital or successful when organized verily for the "interests of England"—not for your own; and that the mutiny against co-operative law which you have hitherto selfishly, and therefore guiltily, sought to punish, is indeed to be punished for precisely the same reasons as mutiny in the Channel Fleet.

I noticed that there was some report of such a thing the other day,—but discredited by the journals in which it appeared, on the ground of the impossibility that men trained as our British sailors are, should disobey their officers, unless under provocation which no modern conditions of the service could involve. How long is it to be before these virtues of loyalty and obedience shall be conceived as capable of development, no less in employments which have some useful end, and fruitful power, than in those which are simply the moral organization of massacre, and the mechanical reduplication of ruin?

When I wrote privately to one of your representatives, the other day, that Abbeydale was to be yielded to your occupation rent-free,* you received the announcement with natural, but, I must now tell you, with thoughtless, gratitude. I ask you no rent

* Practically so. The tenants must legally be bound to pay the same rent as on the other estates of St. George; but in this case, the rents will be entirely returned to the estate, for its own advantage; not diverted into any other channels of operation.

for this land, precisely as a captain of a ship of the line asks no rent for her deck, cleared for action. You are called into a Christian ship of war;—not hiring a corsair's hull, to go forth and rob on the high seas. And you will find the engagements you have made only tenable by a continual reference to the cause for which you are contending,—not to the advantage you hope to reap.

But observe also, that while you suffer as St. George's soldiers, he answers for your lives, as every captain must answer for the lives of his soldiers. Your ranks shall not be thinned by disease or famine, uncared for,—any more than those of the Life Guards; and the simple question for each one of you, every day, will be, not how he and his family are to live, for your bread and water will be sure; but how much good service you can do to your country. You will have only to consider, each day, how much, with an earnest day's labour, you can produce, of any useful things you are able to manufacture. These you are to sell at absolutely fixed prices, for ready money only; and whatever stock remains unsold at the end of the year, over and above the due store for the next, you are to give away, through such officers of distribution as the society shall appoint.

You can scarcely, at present, having been all your lives, hitherto, struggling for security of mere existence, imagine the peace of heart which follows the casting out of the element of selfishness as the root of action; but it is peace, observe, only, that

is promised to you, not at all necessarily, or at least primarily, *joy*. You shall find rest unto your souls when first you take on you the yoke of Christ; but joy only when you have borne it as long as He wills, and are called to enter into the joy of your Lord.

That such promises should have become all but incredible to most of you, is the necessary punishment of the disobedience to the plainest orders of God, in which you have been taught by your prophets, and permitted by your priests, to live for the last quarter of a century. But that this incredibility should be felt as no calamity,—but rather benefit and emancipation; and that the voluble announcement of vile birth and eternal death as the origin and inheritance of man, should be exulted over as a new light of the eyes and strength of the limbs; *this* sometimes, after all that I have resolved, is like to paralyse me into silence—mere horror and inert winter of life.

I am going presently to quote to you, with reference to the accounts of what I have been last doing for your Museum,* some sentences of an admirable letter which has been just put into my hands, though it appeared on the 27th of February last, in the *Manchester Guardian*. An admirable letter, I repeat, in its general aim; and in much of its text;—closing, nevertheless, with the sorrowful admission in the sentence italicized in following extract,—its writer appearing wholly unconscious of the sorrowfulness of it.

* See below, p. 146.

"That art had, as we believe, great popularity in Greece—that it had, as we know, such popularity in Italy—was in great measure owing to its representing personages and events known to all classes. Statue and picture were the illustration of tales, the text of which was in every memory. *For our working men no such tales exist*, though it may be hoped that to the children now in our schools a few heroic actions of great Englishmen will be as well known, when, a few years hence, the children are men and women, as the lives of the saints were to Italian workmen of the fifteenth century, or the hunting in Calydon and the labours of Hercules to Athenians, twenty-three hundred years ago."

"For our working men, no such tales exist." Is that, then, admittedly and conclusively true? Are Englishmen, by order of our school-board, never more to hear of Hercules,—of Theseus,—of Atrides—or the tale of Troy? Nor of the lives of the saints neither? They are to pass their years now as a tale that is *not* told are they? The tale of St. Mary and St. Magdalen—the tale of St. John and his first and last mother*—the tale of St. John's Master, on whose breast he leant? Are all forgotten then? *and* for the English workman, is it to be assumed in the outset of benevolent designs for 'improving his character' that "no such tales exist"?

* "Then came unto him the mother of the two sons of Zebedee, beseeching him."

"Then saith he to that disciple, Behold thy mother."

And those other tales, which *do* exist—good Manchester friend,—tales *not* of the saints? Of the Magdalens who love—*not* much; and the Marys, who never waste anything; and the "heroic Englishmen" who feel the "interests of England" to be—their own?—You will have pictures of these, you think, for improvement of our working mind. Alas, good friend, but where is your painter to come from? You have forgotten, in the quaintest way, to ask *that!* When you recognize as our inevitable fate that we shall no more "learn in our childhood, as the Italians did, at once grateful reverence for the love of Christ, the sufferings of the Virgin, or the patient courage of the saints," and yet would endeavour to comfort us in the loss of these learnings by surrounding us with "beautiful things"—you have not told us who shall make them! You tell us that the Greeks were surrounded with beautiful objects. True; but the Greeks must have *made* them before they could be surrounded by them. How did they so? The Romans stole them, in the spirit of conquest; and we buy them—in the spirit of trade. But the Greek and the Italian *created* them. By what spirit?—they?

Although attempting no answer to this ultimate question, the immediate propositions in the paper are, as I have said, admirable; and in the comments with which I must accompany what I now quote of it, please understand that I am not opposing the writer, but endeavouring to lead him on the traces of his hitherto right thoughts, into their true consequences.

The sentences quoted above are part of a description of England, in which I leave them now to take their proper place.

"What are the conditions under which art is now studied? We meet in no temples adorned with statues of gods, whose forms are at the same time symbols of divine power and types of earthly beauty. (*a*) Our eyes are not trained to judge sculpture by watching the lithe strong limbs of athletes. (*b*) We do not learn in our childhood, as the Italians did, at once grateful reverence for the love of Christ, the sufferings of the Virgin, the patient courage of the saints, and admiration of the art that shadowed them forth. But we have the Royal Institution in Mosley Street, and its annual exhibition of pictures and sculpture. We have far less leisure than the contemporaries of Raphael or of Praxiteles. (*c*) Our

(*a*) In his presently following proposals for "a better system," the writer leaves many of these calamitous conditions unspoken of, assuming them, presumably, to be irretrievable. And this first one, that we do not meet in temples, etc., he passes in such silence.

May I at least suggest that if we cannot have any graven images of gods, at least, since the first of the Latter-day pamphlets, we might have demolished those of our various Hudsons.

(*b*) The writer feels instinctively, but his readers might not gather the implied inference, that locomotives, however swift, as substitutes for legs, and rifles or torpedoes, however effective and far-reaching as substitutes for arms, cannot,—by some extraordinary appointments of Providence in the matter of taste,—be made subjects of heroic sculpture.

(*c*) Why, my friend? Does not Mr. Goldwin Smith declare that "there has been nothing in the commercial history of any country, of either ancient or modern times, that would compare with the mass of opulence of England of the present day"?—and cannot opulence purchase leisure? It is true that Mr. Goldwin Smith is a goose; and his inquiries into the commercial history of ancient and modern times have never reached so far as

eyes rest patiently on the unmeaning and ugly forms of modern furniture, on soot-begrimed and hideous houses, on a stratum of smoke-laden air that usurps the name of sky. (*d*) The modern system of landscape painting, the modern use of water-colour, alone suffice to make an intelligent knowledge of art far more difficult than it was two hundred years ago. (*e*) Yet we act as if we believed that by strolling for a few hours a day, on a few days in the year, through a collection of pictures most of

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the origin even of adulteration of butter; (Look back, by the way, to Fors, vol. ii., pp. 486–488; and just take these farther little contributions on the subject. The other day, in the Hotel de la Poste at Brieg, I had a nice girl-waitress from the upper Valais; to whom, having uttered complaint of the breakfast honey being watery and brown, instead of sugary and white, "What!" she said, in self-reproachful tone, "have I brought you 'du clair'?" and running briskly away, returned presently with a clod of splendid saccharine snow. "Well, but tell me then, good Louise, what do they put in their honey to make this mess of it, that they gave you first for me?" "Carrots, I believe, sir," she answered, bravely; and I was glad to hear it was no worse;) but, though Mr. Goldwin Smith *be* a goose, and though, instead of an opulent nation, we are indeed too poor to buy fresh butter, or eat fresh meat,—is even that any reason why we should have no leisure? What are all our machines for, then? Can we do in ten minutes, without man or horse, what a Greek could not have done in a year, with all the king's horses and all the king's men?— and is the result of all this magnificent mechanism, only that we have "far less leisure"?

(*a*) One of the most grotesque consequences of this total concealment of the sky, with respect to art, is the hatred of the modern landscape painter for blue colour! I walked through the Royal Academy yesterday; and found that, in all the landscapes, the sky was painted like a piece of white wall plaster.

(*e*) Probably the modern use of landscape painting, and the modern use of water-colour, are wrong, then. The use of good landscape painting is to make the knowledge of nature easier,—not the knowledge of art more difficult,—than it was in earlier days.

which are bad, and by carelessly looking at a few pictures of our own, we can learn to understand and be interested in more forms of art than Da Vinci or Michael Angelo would have tried to master, at a time when art still confined itself to familiar and noble subjects, and had not yet taken the whole universe for its province. (*f*)

"Is no better system possible? It is, I believe, as certain that in the last twenty years we have learnt to better understand good music, and to love it more, as that in the same time our knowledge and love of pictures have not increased. *The reason is easily found. Our music has been chosen for us by masters, and our pictures have been chosen by ourselves.* (*g*) If we can imagine

(*f*) I do not myself observe any petulant claims on the part of modern art to take the universe for its province. It appears to me, on the contrary, to be principally occupied in its own dining-room, dressing-room, and drawing-room.

(*g*) I have italicized this sentence, a wonderful admission from an Englishman: and indeed the gist of the whole matter. But the statement that our pictures have been chosen by ourselves is not wholly true. It was so in the days when English amateurs filled their houses with Teniers, Rubens, and Guido, and might more cheaply have bought Angelico and Titian. But we have not been masterless of late years; far from it. The suddenly luminous idea that Art might possibly be a lucrative occupation, secured the submission of England to such instruction as, with that object, she could procure: and the Professorship of Sir Henry Cole at Kensington has corrupted the system of art teaching all over England into a state of abortion and falsehood from which it will take twenty years to recover. The Professorships also of Messrs. Agnew at Manchester have covered the walls of that metropolis with "exchangeable property" on the exchanges of which the dealer always made his commission, and of which perhaps one canvas in a hundred is of some intrinsic value, and may be hereafter put to good and permanent use. But the first of all conditions, for this object, is that the Manchester men *should*, for a little

exhibitions where good, bad, and indifferent symphonies, quartets, and songs could be heard, not more imperfectly than pictures good, bad, and indifferent are seen at the Academy, and works to which at a concert we must listen for twenty minutes were to be listened through in as many seconds, or indeed by an ear glance at a few bars, can we doubt that pretty tunes would be more popular than the finest symphonies of Beethoven, or the loveliest of Schubert's songs?

"It is surely possible (*h*) to find a man or men who

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while, 'choose for themselves'! That they should buy nothing with intent to sell it again; and that they should buy it of the artist only, face to face with him; or from the exhibition wall by direct correspondence with him. The existence of the modern picture dealer is impossible in any city or country where art is to prosper; but some day I hope to arrange a 'bottega' for the St. George's Company, in which water-colour drawings shall be sold, none being received at higher price than fifty guineas, nor at less than six,—(Prout's old fixed standard for country dealers,)—and at the commission of one guinea to the shopkeeper, paid by the buyer; on the understanding that the work is, by said shopkeeper, known to be good, and warranted as such; just as simply as a dealer in cheese or meat answers for the quality of those articles.

(*h*) Perfectly possible; if first you will take the pains to ascertain that the person who is to guide you in painting, can paint, as you ascertained of Mr. Hallé that he could play. You did not go to the man at the music shop, and pay him fifty guineas commission for recommending you a new tune, did you? But what else than that have you ever done, with respect to painting? I once, for instance, myself, took the trouble to recommend the burghers of Liverpool to buy a Raphael. As nobody had paid, or was to pay me, any commission for my recommendation, they looked on it as an impertinence; printed it—though written as a private letter to a personal friend,—made what jest they could out of it, declared the picture was cracked, left it to crack farther, bought more David Coxes, and got an amateur lecturer next year to lecture to them on the beauties of Raphael.

But if you will get once quit of your precious British idea that

will guide us in our study of pictures as Mr. Hallé has guided us in our study of music,—who will place before us good pictures, and carefully guard us from seeing bad. A collection of a dozen pictures in oil and water colour, each excellent of its kind, each with an explanation of what its painter most wished to show, of his method of work, of his reasons for choosing his point of view, and for each departure from the strictest possible accuracy in imitation, written by men of fit nature and training—such a collection would be of far greater help to those people who desire to study art than any number of ordinary exhibitions of pictures. Men who by often looking at these few works, knew them well, would have learnt more of painting, and would have a safer standard by which to judge other pictures, than is often learnt and gained by those who are not painters. Such a collection would not need a costly building for its reception, so that in each of our parks a small gallery of the kind might be formed, which might, of course, also contain a few good engravings, good vases, and good casts, each with a carefully written explanation of our reasons for thinking it good. Then, perhaps, in a few years, authority would do for these forms of art what it has done for music. But many other lessons could at the same time be taught. None is of greater importance

your security is in the dealer's commission on the cost, you may get help and authority easily enough. If you look at Number VI. of my 'Mornings in Florence,' you will see that I speak with somewhat mortified respect of my friend Mr. Charles F. Murray, as knowing more, in many ways, of Italian pictures than I do myself. You may give *him* any sum you like to spend in Italian pictures,—you will find that none of it sticks to his fingers: that every picture he buys for you is a good one; and that he will charge you simply for his time.

than that beautiful form in the things that surround us can give us as much, if not as high, pleasure, as that in pictures and statues;—that our sensibility for higher forms of beauty is fostered by everything beautiful that gives us pleasure;—and that the cultivation of a sense of beauty is not necessarily costly, but is as possible for people of moderate incomes as for the rich. Why should not the rooms in which pictures are shown be furnished as the rooms are furnished in which the few English people of cultivated love of art live, so that we may learn from them that the difference between beautiful and ugly wall papers, carpets, curtains, vases, chairs, and tables is as real as the difference between good and bad pictures? In hundreds of people there is dormant a sensibility to beauty that this would be enough to awaken.

"Of our working classes, comparatively few ever enter a gallery of pictures, and unless a sense of beauty can be awakened by other means, the teaching of the School of Art is not likely to be sought by many people of that class. In our climate, home, and not gallery or piazza, is the place where the influence of art must be felt. To carry any forms of art into the homes of working people would a few years ago have been impossible. Happily we have seen lately the creation of schools and workmen's clubs, destined, we may hope, to be as truly parts of their homes as public-houses have been, and as their cramped houses are. Our schools are already so well managed that probably many children pass in them the happiest hours they know. In those large, airy rooms let us place a few beautiful casts, a few drawings of subjects, if possible, that the elder children read of in their lessons, a few vases or pretty screens. By gifts of a few simple things of this kind, of a few beautiful

flowers beautifully arranged, the love and the study of art will be more helped than by the gift of twenty times their cost to the building fund of an art gallery."

From the point where my last note interrupted it, the preceding letter is all admirable; and the passage respecting choice and explanation of pictures, the most valuable I have ever seen printed in a public journal on the subject of the Arts. But let me strongly recommend the writer to put out of his thoughts, for the time, all questions of beautiful furniture and surroundings. Perfectly simple shelter, under the roughest stones and timber that will keep out the weather, is at present the only wholesome condition of private life. Let there be no assumptions of anything, or attempts at anything, but cleanliness, health, and honesty, both in person and possession. Then, whatever you can afford to spend for education in art, give to good masters, and leave them to do the best they can for you: and what you can afford to spend for the splendour of your city, buy grass, flowers, sea, and sky with. No art of man is possible without those primal Treasures of the art of God.

I must not close this letter without noting some of the deeper causes which may influence the success of an effort made this year in London, and in many respects on sound principles, for the promulgation of Art-knowledge; the opening, namely, of the Grosvenor Gallery.

In the first place, it has been planned and is directed

by a gentleman * in the true desire to help the artists and better the art of his country :—not as a commercial speculation. Since in this main condition it is right, I hope success for it; but in very many secondary matters it must be set on different footing before its success can be sure.

Sir Coutts Lindsay is at present an amateur both in art and shopkeeping. He must take up either one or the other business, if he would prosper in either. If he intends to manage the Grosvenor Gallery rightly, he must not put his own works in it until he can answer for their quality: if he means to be a painter, he must not at present superintend the erection of public buildings, or amuse himself with their decoration by china and upholstery. The upholstery of the Grosvenor Gallery is poor in itself; and very grievously injurious to the best pictures it contains, while its glitter as unjustly veils the vulgarity of the worst.

In the second place, it is unadvisable to group the works of each artist together. The most original of painters repeat themselves in favourite dexterities, —the most excellent of painters forget themselves in habitual errors: and it is unwise to exhibit in too close sequence the monotony of their virtues, and the obstinacy of their faults. In some cases, of course, the pieces of intended series illustrate and enhance each other's beauty,—as notably the Gainsborough

* As also, by the way, the Fine-art Gallery by my friend Mr. Huish, who means no less well.

Royal Portraits last year; and the really beautiful ones of the three sisters, by Millais, in this gallery. But in general it is better that each painter should, in fitting places, take his occasional part in the pleasantness of the picture-concert, than at once run through all his pieces, and retire.

In the third place, the pictures of scholars ought not to be exhibited together with those of their masters; more especially in cases where a school is so distinct as that founded by Mr. Burne Jones, and contains many elements definitely antagonistic to the general tendencies of public feeling. Much that is noble in the expression of an individual mind, becomes contemptible as the badge of a party; and although nothing is more beautiful or necessary in the youth of a painter than his affection and submission to his teacher, his own work, during the stage of subservience, should never be exhibited where the master's may be either confused by the frequency, or disgraced by the fallacy, of its echo.

Of the estimate which should be formed of Mr. Jones's own work, I have never, until now, felt it my duty to speak; partly because I knew that the persons who disliked it were incapable of being taught better; and partly because I could not myself wholly determine how far the qualities which are to many persons so repulsive, were indeed reprehensible.

His work, first, is simply the only art-work at present produced in England which will be received by the future as 'classic' in its kind,—the best that

has been, or could be. I think those portraits by Millais may be immortal, (if the colour is firm,) but only in such subordinate relation to Gainsborough and Velasquez, as Bonifazio, for instance, to Titian. But the action of imagination of the highest power in Burne Jones, under the conditions of scholarship, of social beauty, and of social distress, which necessarily aid, thwart, and colour it, in the nineteenth century, are alone in art,—unrivalled in their kind; and I *know* that these will be immortal, as the best things the mid-nineteenth century in England could do, in such true relations as it had, through all confusion, retained with the paternal and everlasting Art of the world.

Secondly. Their faults are, so far as I can see, inherent in them as the shadow of their virtues;—not consequent on any error which we should be wise in regretting, or just in reproving. With men of consummately powerful imagination, the question is always, between finishing one conception, or partly seizing and suggesting three or four: and among all the great inventors, Botticelli is the only one who never allowed conception to interfere with completion. All the others,—Giotto, Masaccio, Luini, Tintoret, and Turner, permit themselves continually in slightness; and the resulting conditions of execution ought, I think, in every case to be received as the best possible, under the given conditions of imaginative force. To require that any one of these Days of Creation should have been finished as Bellini or Carpaccio would have finished

it, is simply to require that the other Days should not have been begun.

Lastly, the mannerisms and errors of these pictures, whatever may be their extent, are never affected or indolent. The work is natural to the painter, however strange to us; and it is wrought with utmost conscience of care, however far, to his own or our desire, the result may yet be incomplete. Scarcely so much can be said for any other pictures of the modern schools: their eccentricities are almost always in some degree forced; and their imperfections gratuitously, if not impertinently, indulged.

Among the minor works carefully and honourably finished in this gallery, M. Heilbuth's are far the best, but I think M. Tissot's require especial notice, because their dexterity and brilliancy are apt to make the spectator forget their conscientiousness. Most of them are, unhappily, mere coloured photographs of vulgar society; but the 'Strength of Will,' though sorely injured by the two subordinate figures, makes me think the painter capable, if he would obey his graver thoughts, of doing much that would, with real benefit, occupy the attention of that part of the French and English public whose fancy is at present caught only by Gustave Doré. The rock landscape by Millais has also been carefully wrought, but with exaggeration of the ligneous look of the rocks. Its colour as a picture, and the sense it conveys of the real beauty of the scene, are both grievously weakened by the white sky; already noticed as one of the characteristic errors of recent landscape. But

the spectator may still gather from them some conception of what this great painter might have done, had he remained faithful to the principles of his school when he first led its onset. Time was, he could have painted every herb of the rock, and every wave of the stream, with the precision of Van-Eyck, and the lustre of Titian.

And such animals as he drew,—for perfectness and ease of action, and expression of whatever in them had part in the power or the peace of humanity! He could have painted the red deer of the moor, and the lamb of the fold, as never man did yet in this world. You will never know what you have lost in him. But landscape, and living creature, and the soul of man,—you are like to lose them all, soon. I had many things to say to you in this Fors;—of the little lake of Thirlmere, and stream of St. John's Vale, which Manchester, in its zeal for art, is about to drain from their mountain-fields into its water-closets (make pictures of those, will you then, my Manchester friends?); so also for educational purposes, here in the fine West of London, the decent burghers place their middle-class girls' school at the end of Old Burlington Street, and put a brutal head, to make mouths at them, over its door. *There*, if you will think of it, you may see the complete issue of Sir Henry Cole's professorship at Kensington. This is the best your Modern Art can write—of divine inscription over the strait gate—for its girl-youth! But I have no more time, nor any words bitter enough, to speak rightly of the

evil of these things; and here have Fors and St. Theodore been finding, for me, a little happy picture of sacred animal life, to end with for this time. It is from a lovely story of a country village and its good squire and gentle priest—told by one of my dear friends,—and every word of it true,—in *Baily's Magazine* for this month.* It is mostly concerning a Derby Favourite, and is a strait lesson in chivalry throughout;—but this is St. Theodore's bit of it. The horse had been sent down to Doncaster to run for the St. Leger, and there went off his feed, and became restless and cheerless,—so that every one thought he had been 'got at.' One of the stable-boys, watching him, at last said, "He's a-looking for his kitten." The kitten was telegraphed for, and sent down, two hundred miles. "The moment it was taken out of its basket and saw the horse, it jumped on his back, ran over his head, and was in the manger in a moment, and began patting his nose." And the horse took to his feed again, and was as well as ever—and won the race.

I have obtained the kind consent of Mr. George Baker (at present the Mayor of Birmingham), to accept Trusteeship for us,† such Trusteeship being always understood as not implying any general consent in the principles of the Company, but only favourable sympathy in its main objects. Our second Trustee will be Mr. Q. Talbot, virtually the donor, together with his mother,

* Magazine—or Miscellany. I forget which.

[† The former Trustees having resigned.]

who has so zealously helped us in all ways, of our little rock-estate at Barmouth. I am just going down to see the twenty acres which Mr. Baker has also given us in Worcestershire. It is woodland, of which I have ordered the immediate clearing of about the fourth part; this is being done under Mr. Baker's kind superintendence.

At last our legal position is, I think, also secure. Our solicitors have been instructed by Mr. Barber to apply to the Board of Trade for a licence under sec. 23 of the "Companies Act, 1867." The conditions of licence stated in that section appear to have been drawn up precisely for the convenience of the St. George's Company, and the terms of it are clearer than any I have yet been able to draw up myself, as follows:—

"The income and property of the Association, whencesoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Association as set forth in this memorandum of association; and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, or bonus, or otherwise howsoever by way of profit, to the persons who at any time are or have been members of the Association, or to any of them, or to any person claiming through any of them.

"Provided that nothing herein shall prevent the payment, in good faith, of remuneration to any officers or servants of the Association, or to any member of the Association, or other person, in return for any services actually rendered to the Association."

There will not, in the opinion of our lawyers, be any difficulty in obtaining the sanction of the Board of Trade under this Act; but I remain myself prepared for the occurrence of new points of formal difficulty; and must still and always pray the Companions to remember that the real strength of the Society is in its

resolved and vital unity; not in the limits of its external form.

I must enter into more particulars than I have space for, to-day, respecting the position of some of our poorer Companions, before explaining some of the smaller items of wages in the subjoined account.* The principal sums have been paid to Mr. Swan for the gradual furnishing of the museum; and to artists at Venice for drawings made for its art gallery. But for £100 of the £150 last paid to Mr. Murray, I have also secured, with his assistance, a picture of extreme value that has been hitherto overlooked in the Manfrini gallery: and clearly kept for us by Fors, as the exactly right picture on the possession of which to found our Sheffield school of art. It is a Madonna by Verrocchio, the master of Lionardo da Vinci, of Lorenzo di Credi, and of Perugino, and the grandest metal-worker of Italy.

And it is entirely pure and safe for us: but will need carefullest securing of the tempera colour on its panel before it can be moved: it cannot, therefore, reach Sheffield till the autumn. The other works bought for the Museum will be there in the course of this month.

[* The detailed accounts of the Guild are not reprinted in this small edition.—Ed.]

LETTER LXXX

THE TWO CLAVIGERÆ

BELLEFIELD, BIRMINGHAM, *16th July*, 1877.

I NEVER yet sate down to write my Fors, or indeed to write anything, in so broken and puzzled a state of mind as that in which, this morning, I have been for the last ten minutes idly listening to the plash of the rain; and watching the workmen on the new Gothic school, which is fast blocking out the once pretty country view from my window.

I have been staying for two days with the good Mayor of Birmingham: and he has shown me St. George's land, his gift, in the midst of a sweet space of English hill and dale and orchard, yet unhurt by hand of man: and he has brought a representative group of the best men of Birmingham to talk to me; and they have been very kind to me, and have taught me much: and I feel just as I can fancy a poor Frenchman of some gentleness and sagacity might have felt, in Nelson's time,—taken prisoner by his mortal enemies, and beginning to apprehend that there was indeed some humanity in Englishmen, and some providential and inscrutable reason for their existence.

You may think it strange that a two days' visit should produce such an effect on me; and say, (which indeed will be partly true,) that I ought to have made this visit before now. But, all things considered, I believe it has been with exactness, timely; and you will please remember that just in proportion to the quantity of work and thought we have spent on any subject, is the quantity we can farther learn about it in a little while, and the power with which new facts, or new light cast on those already known, will modify past conclusions. And when the facts are wholly trustworthy, and the lights thrown precisely where one asks for them, a day's talk may sometimes do as much as a year's work.

The one great fact which I have been most clearly impressed by, here, is the right-mindedness of these men, so far as they see what they are doing. There is no equivocation with their consciences,—no silencing of their thoughts in any wilful manner: nor, under the conditions apparent to them, do I believe it possible for them to act more wisely or faithfully. That some conditions, non-apparent to them, may give unexpectedly harmful consequences to their action, is wholly the fault of others.

Meantime, recovering myself as a good ship tries to do after she has been struck by a heavy sea, I must say to my Birmingham friends a few things which I could not, while I was bent on listening and learning;—could not, also, in courtesy, but after deliberation had: so that, in all our debate, I was

under this disadvantage, that they could say to me, with full pleasure and frankness, all that was in their minds; but I could not say, without much fear and pause, what was in mine. Of which unspoken regrets this is the quite initial and final one; that all they showed me, and told me of good, involved yet the main British modern idea that the master and his men should belong to two entirely different classes; perhaps loyally related to and assisting each other; but yet,—the one, on the whole, living in hardship—the other in ease;—the one uncomfortable—the other in comfort;—the one supported in its dishonourable condition by the hope of labouring through it to the higher one,—the other honourably distinguished by their success, and rejoicing in their escape from a life which must nevertheless be always (as they suppose,) led by a thousand to one * of the British people. Whereas St. George, whether in Agriculture, Architecture, or Manufacture, concerns himself only with the life of the workman,—refers all to that,—measures all by that,—holds the Master, Lord, and King, only as an instrument for the ordering of that; requires of Master, Lord, and King, the entire sharing and understanding of the hardship of that,—and his fellowship with it as the only foundation of his authority over it.

* I do not use this as a rhetorical expression. Take the lower shopkeepers with the operatives, and add the great army of the merely helpless and miserable; and I believe "a thousand to one" of the disgraced and unhappy poor to the honoured rich will be found a quite temperately expressed proportion.

'But we *have* been in it, some of us,—and know it, and have, by our patience——'

'Won your escape from it.' I am rude—but I know what you would say. Does then the Physician —the Artist—the Soldier—the good Priest—labour only for escape from his profession? Is not this manufacturing toil, as compared with all these, a despised one, and a miserable,—by the confession of all your efforts, and the proclamation of all your pride; and will you yet go on, if it may be, to fill England, from sea to sea, with this unhappy race, out of which you have risen?

'But we cannot all be physicians, artists, or soldiers. How are we to live?'

Assuredly not in multitudinous misery. Do you think that the Maker of the world intended all but one in a thousand of His creatures to live in these dark streets; and the one, triumphant over the rest, to go forth alone into the green fields?

This was what I was thinking, and more than ever thinking, all the while my good host was driving me by Shenstone's home, the Leasowes, into the vale of Severn; and telling me how happily far away St. George's ground was, from all that is our present England's life, and—pretended—glory. As we drove down the hill a little farther towards Bewdley, (Worcestershire for 'Beaulieu,' I find;—Fors undertakes for pretty names to us, it seems,—Abbey-dale, Beau-lieu, and if I remember, or translate, rightly, the House by the Fountain—our three Saxon, Norman, and Celtic beginnings of

abode,) my host asked me if I would like to see 'nailing.' "Yes, truly." So he took me into a little cottage where were two women at work,—one about seventeen or eighteen, the other perhaps four or five and thirty; this last intelligent of feature as well could be; and both, gentle and kind,—each with hammer in right hand, pincers in left, (heavier hammer poised over her anvil, and let fall at need by the touch of her foot on a treadle like that of a common grindstone). Between them, a small forge, fed to constant brightness by the draught through the cottage, above whose roof its chimney rose:—in front of it, on a little ledge, the glowing lengths of cut iron rod, to be dealt with at speed. Within easy reach of this, looking up at us in quietly silent question,—stood, each in my sight an ominous Fors, the two Clavigeræ.

At a word, they laboured, with ancient Vulcanian skill. Foot and hand in perfect time: no dance of Muses on Parnassian mead in truer measure;—no sea fairies upon yellow sands more featly footed. Four strokes with the hammer in the hand: one ponderous and momentary blow ordered of the balanced mass by the touch of the foot; and the forged nail fell aside, finished, on its proper heap;—level-headed, wedge-pointed,* a thousand lives

* Flattened on two sides, I mean: they were nails for fastening the railroad metals to the sleepers, and made out of three-inch (or thereabouts) lengths of iron rod, which I was surprised and pleased to find, in spite of all our fine machines, the women still prefer to cut by hand.

soon to depend daily on its driven grip of the iron way.

So wrought they,—the English Matron and Maid; —so was it their darg to labour from morning to evening,—seven to seven,—by the furnace side,— the winds of summer fanning the blast of it. The wages of the Matron Fors, I found, were eight shillings a week;*—her husband, otherwise and variously employed, could make sixteen. Three shillings a week for rent and taxes, left, as I count, for the guerdon of their united labour, if constant, and its product providently saved, fifty-five pounds a year, on which they had to feed and clothe themselves and their six children; eight souls in their little Worcestershire ark.

Nevertheless, I hear of all my friends pitying the distress I propose to reduce myself to, in living, all alone, upon three hundred and sixty, and doing nothing for it but contemplate the beauties of nature; while these two poor women, with other such, pay what portion of their three shillings a week goes to provide me with my annual dividend.

Yet it was not chiefly their labour in which I pitied them, but rather in that their forge-dress did not well set off their English beauty; nay, that the beauty itself was marred by the labour; so that to most persons, who could not have looked through such veil and shadow, they were as their Master, and had no form nor comeliness. And all the while,

* Sixteen-pence a day, or, for four days' work, the price of a lawyer's letter.

as I watched them, I was thinking of two other Englishwomen, of about the same relative ages, with whom, in planning last Fors, I had been standing a little while before Edward Burne Jones's picture of Venus's Mirror, and mourning in my heart for its dulness, that it, with all its Forget-me-nots, would not forget the images it bore, and take the fairer and nobler reflection of their instant life. Were these then, here,—their sisters; who had only, for Venus's mirror, a heap of ashes; compassed about with no Forget-me-nots, but with the Forgetfulness of all the world?

I said just now that the evil to which the activities of my Birmingham friends tended was in nowise their own fault.

Shall I say now whose fault it is?

I am blamed by my prudent acquaintances for being too personal; but truly, I find vaguely objurgatory language generally a mere form of what Plato calls *σκιαμαχία*, or shadow-fight: and that unless one can plainly say, Thou art the man, (or woman, which is more probable,) one might as well say nothing at all. So I will frankly tell, without wandering into wider circles, among my own particular friends, whose fault it is. First, those two lovely ladies who were studying the Myosotis palustris with me;—yes, and by the way, a little beauty from Cheshire who came in afterwards;—and then, that charming—(I didn't say she was charming, but she was, and is)—lady whom I had charge of at Furness Abbey, (Fors XI.,

vol. i. p. 209,) and her two daughters; and those three beautiful girls who tormented me so on the 23rd of May, 1875, (Fors LIV., vol. iii. p. 112,) and another one who greatly disturbed my mind at church, only a Sunday or two ago, with the sweetest little white straw bonnet I had ever seen, only letting a lock or two escape of the curliest hair, so that I was fain to make her a present of a Prayer-book afterwards, advising her that her tiny ivory one was too coquettish,—and my own pet cousin; and—I might name more, but leave their accusation to their consciences.

These, and the like of them, (not that there are very many their like,) are the very head and front of mischief;—first, because, as I told them in Queens' Gardens, ages ago, they have it in their power to do whatever they like with men and things, and yet do so little with either; and secondly, because by very reason of their beauty and virtue, they have become the excuse for all the iniquity of our days: it seems so impossible that the social order which produces such creatures should be a wrong one.* Read, for instance, this letter concerning them from a man both wise and good, (though thus deceived!) sent me in comment on Fors for April, 1876, referring especially to vol. iii. pp. 301, 302:—

* 'Would you have us less fair and pure then?' No; but I would have you resolve that your beauty should no more be bought with the disgrace of others, nor your safety with their temptation. Read again Fors XLV., vol. ii. pp. 437, 438.

"My dear Ruskin,—Thank you for Fors, which I have read eagerly, but without being quite able to make out what you are at. You are hard on Mr. Keble and the poor lady who 'dresses herself and her children becomingly.' If ever your genuine brickmaker gets hold of her and her little ones—as he very likely may some day,—he will surely tear them to pieces, and say that he has your authority for thinking that he is doing God a service. Poor lady!—and yet dressing becomingly and looking pleasant are a deal harder, and better worth doing, than brickmaking. You make no allowance for the many little labours and trials (the harder to do and bear, perhaps, because they are so little,) which she must meet with, and have to perform in that 'trivial round' of visiting and dressing. As it is, she is at least no worse than a flower of the field. But what prigs would she and her husband become if they did actually take to dilettante (*i.e.*, non-compulsory) brickmaking! In their own way, almost all 'rich' people, as well as the so-called 'poor'—who, man, woman, and child, pay £5 each per annum in *taxes* on intoxicating drinks —*do* eat their bread in the sweat of their faces: for the word you quote 'is very broad,' and more kinds of bread than one, and more sorts of sweat than one, are meant therein."

A letter this which, every time I read it, overwhelms me with deeper amazement: but I had rather, if it may be, hear from some of my fair friends what *they* think of it, before I farther tell them thoughts of mine; only, lest they should hold anything I have in this Fors said, or am, in the next, likely to say, disloyal to their queenship, or their order, here are two more little pieces of Plato,

expressing his eternal fidelity to Conservatism, which, like the words of his in last Fors, I again pray to be permitted, reverently, to take also for mine.

"For at that time" (of the battle of Marathon. Mr. Lowe may perhaps be interested in observing,) "there was an ancient polity among us, and *ancient divisions of rank, founded on possession;* and the queen * over us all was a noble shame, for cause of which we chose to live in bondage to the existing laws. By which shame, as often before now said, all men who are ever to be brave and good must be bound; but the base and cowardly are free from it, and have no fear of it. . . .

"And these laws which we have now told through, are what most men call unwritten laws: and what besides they call laws of the Fatherland, are but the sum and complete force of these. Of which we have said justly that we must neither call them laws, nor yet leave them unspoken,—for these lie in the very heart of all that has been written, and that is written now, or can be written for evermore: being simply and questionlessly father-laws from the beginning, which, once well-founded and practised, encompass † with eternal security whatever following laws are established within these: but if once the limits of these be overpassed,‡ and their melody

* 'Despotis,' the feminine of Despot.

† More strictly, 'cover,' or 'hide' with security; a lovely word—having in it almost the fulness of the verse,—"in the secret of the tabernacle shall He hide me." Compare the beginning of Part III. of 'St. Mark's Rest.'

‡ The apparent confusion of thought between 'enclosing' and 'supporting' is entirely accurate in this metaphor. The foundation of a great building is always wider than the superstructure; and if it is on loose ground, the outer stones must grasp it like a chain, embedded themselves in the earth, motionlessly. The embedded

broken, it is as when the secretest foundations of a building fail, and all that has been built on them, however beautiful, collapses together,—stone ruining against stone."

The unwritten and constant Law of which Plato is here speaking, is that which my readers will now find enough defined for them in the preface to the second volume of 'Bibliotheca Pastorum,' p. xxvi., as being the *Guardian* Law of Life, in the perception of which, and obedience to which, all the life of States for ever consists. And if now the reader will compare the sentence at the bottom of that page, respecting the more gross violations of such law by Adultery and Usury, with the farther notes on Usury in page 17, and then, read, connectedly, the 14th and 15th Psalms in Sidney's translation,* he will begin to understand the mingled weariness and indignation with which I continue to receive letters in defence of Usury, from men who are quite scholars enough to ascertain the facts of Heaven's Law and Revelation for

cannon-balls at the foundation of any of the heaps at Woolwich will show you what Plato means by these Earth, or Fatherland, laws; you may compare them with the first tiers of the Pyramids, if you can refer to a section of these.

* 'Rock Honeycomb' cost me and my printers' best reader more than usual pains to get into form; some errata have, nevertheless, escaped us both; of which 'fully' for 'full,' in line 114, as spoiling a pretty stanza, and '106' for '166,' in page 62, as causing some inconvenience, had better be at once corrected. It is also the hundred and first, not the fifty-first psalm whose rhythm is analyzed at page xliii. of the Preface.

themselves, but will not,—partly in self-deceived respect to their own interests; and partly in mere smug conceit, and shallow notion that they can discern in ten minutes objections enough to confound statements of mine that are founded on the labour of as many years.

The portion of a letter from a clergyman to Mr. Sillar, which I have printed in appendix to this Letter, deserves a moment's more attention than other such forms of the 'Dixit Insipiens,' because it expresses with precision the dullest of all excuses for usury, that some kind of good is done by the usurer.

Nobody denies the good done; but the principle of Righteous dealing is, that if the good costs you nothing, you must not be paid for doing it. Your friend passes your door on an unexpectedly wet day, unprovided for the occasion. You have the choice of three benevolences to him,—lending him your umbrella,—lending him eighteenpence to pay for a cab,—or letting him stay in your parlour till the rain is over. If you charge him interest on the umbrella, it is profit on capital—if you charge him interest on the eighteenpence, it is ordinary usury—if you charge him interest on the parlour, it is rent. All three are equally forbidden by Christian law, being actually worse, because more plausible and hypocritical sins, than if you at once plainly refused your friend shelter, umbrella, or pence. You feel yourself to be a brute, in the one case, and may some day repent into grace; in the other you

imagine yourself an honest and amiable person, rewarded by Heaven for your charity: and the whole frame of society becomes rotten to its core. Only be clear about what is finally right, whether you can do it or not; and every day you will be more and more able to do it if you try.

For the rest, touching the minor distinctions of less and greater evil in such matters, you will find some farther discourse in the fourth article of our Correspondence: and for my own compromises, past or future, with the practices I condemn, in receiving interest, whether on St. George's part or my own, I hold my former answer consistently sufficient, that if any of my readers will first follow me in all that I have done, I will undertake in full thereafter to satisfy their curiosity as to my reasons for doing no more.

The following letter, expressing a modern clergyman's sense of his privileges in being "a Gentile, and no Jew," in that so long as he abstains from things strangled, and from fornication, he may fatten at his ease on the manna of Usury,—I cannot but rejoice in preserving, as an elect stone, and precious, in the monumental theology of the Nineteenth Century:—

"Dear Mr. Sillar, -Thanks for calling my notice again to the Jewish law against usury. When we last talked and wrote about this subject, I told you the Hebrew word for usury means *biting*, and our own word *usury* commonly means *unlawful profit.*

"But our conversation this morning has led to this

thought, 'I am a Gentile, and not a Jew.' And Gentile Christians are living under the rules laid down with respect to the peculiar laws of Judaism in Acts xv., where there is no mention made of the Jewish usury law. I refer you to verses 10, 28, and 29. This, to my mind, quite settles the matter.

"You want me to preach against bankers, and lenders of money at interest. Upon my conscience, I cannot preach against the benefactors of their fellow-men.

"Let me give you a case in point. I have myself received great benefit from lenders of money at interest. A year or two ago I bought a new block of chambers near the new Law Courts. I gladly borrowed £8000 to help me to pay for them. Without that assistance I could not have made the purchase, which is a very advantageous one to me already; and will be much more so when the Law Courts are completed.

"How can the trustees of the settlement under which the money was put out, or the person who ultimately receives the interest, be condemned in the day of judgment, according to your theory?

"They have not wronged, nor oppressed, nor bit me; but have really conferred a great benefit upon me. And I hope I am not to be condemned for paying them a reasonable interest, which I very willingly do.

"Yours very sincerely."

I received, about three months ago, in Venice, a well-considered and well written letter, asking me how, if I felt it wrong to remain any longer a holder of Bank stock, I yet could consent to hold Consols, and take interest on those, which was surely no less usury than the acceptance of my Bank dividend. To this letter I replied as follows, begging my correspondent to copy the letter, that it might be inserted in Fors:—

"My dear Sir,—I am much pleased by your intelligent question, which you would have seen at any rate answered at length, as soon as I got out of Venice, where I must keep my time for Venetian work—also I did not wish to confuse my statement of facts with theoretical principles.

"*All* interest is usury; but there is a vital difference between exacting the interest of an already contracted debt, and taking part in a business which consists in enabling new ones to be contracted. As a banker, I derange and corrupt the entire system of the commerce of the country; but as a stock-holder I merely buy the right to tax it annually—which, under present circumstances, I am entirely content to do, just as, if I were a born Highlander, I should contentedly levy black-mail, as long as there was no other way for Highlanders to live, unless I thought that my death would put an end to the system;—always admitting myself a thief, but an outspoken, wholesome, or brave thief;* so also, as a stock-holder, I am an outspoken and wholesome usurer;—as a soldier is an outspoken and wholesome murderer. Suppose I had been living as a hired bravo, stabbing for hire, and had written,—'I must quit myself of this murderous business,—I shall go into the army,'—you might ask me, What—are you not still paid an annual income, to kill anybody Mr. Disraeli orders you to? 'Yes,' I should answer; 'but *now* outspokenly, and, as I think soldiering is managed, without demoralizing the nature of other people. But, as a bravo, I demoralized both myself and the people I served.'

"It is quite true that my *phrase* 'to quit myself of usury and the Bank of England,' implied that stock

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* Compare Fors, Letter XLV., (vol. ii. pp. 431, 432).

interest was not usury at all. But I could not modify the sentence intelligibly, and left it for after explanation.

"All national debts, you must have seen in Fors abused enough. But the debt existing, and on such terms, the value of all money payments depends on it in ways which I cannot explain to you by letter, but will as Fors goes on. Very truly yours."

To this letter I received last month the following reply:—

"My dear Sir,—I am very grateful to you for your courteous and candid letter in reply to mine of the 11th ult. It is with pleasure that I have made, in accordance with your request, the copy of it enclosed herein.

"May I again trespass on your kindness and ask you still further to meet the difficulties into which your teaching on usury has plunged me?

"If a national debt be wrong on principle, is it right of you to encourage its prolongation by lending the country money? Or is the fact of its being 'already contracted' a sufficient reason for your taxing the people annually, and thereby receiving money without working for it?

"Again, is the case of the Highlander quite analogous? *You have* another 'way to live' apart from taking any 'interest' or 'usury'; and should you not, to be quite consistent with your teaching, rather live on your principal as long as it lasts? (Fors LXX., pp. 409–10.) You speak of yourself as 'an outspoken and wholesome usurer';—if I read aright, you taught in Fors LXVIII., pp. 385–86, that the law enunciated in Leviticus xxv. 35–37, 'is the simple law for all of us—one of those which Christ assuredly came not to destroy but to fulfil.' If '*all* interest is usury,' is not the acceptance of it—

even when derived from Consols—contrary to the law of Christ, and therefore sinful? Can there be any 'wholesome' sin, however outspoken?

"Pardon my thus trespassing on your time, and believe me, Gratefully and faithfully yours."

The questions put by my correspondent in this second letter have all been answered in Fors already, (had he read carefully,) and that several times over; but lest he should think such answer evasive, I will go over the ground once more with him.

First, in reply to his general question, 'Can there be *any* wholesome sin?' No; but the violation of a general law is not always sin. 'Thou shalt not kill' is a general law. But Phinehas is blessed for slaying, and Saul rejected for sparing.

Secondly. Of acts which under certain conditions would be sin, there is every degree of wholesomeness and unwholesomeness, according to the absence or presence of those conditions. For the most part, open sin is wholesomer than secret; yet some iniquity is fouler for being drawn with cords of vanity, and some blasphemy baser for being deliberate and insolent, like that of our modern men of science. So again, all sin that is fraudful is viler than that which is violent; but the venal fraud of Delilah is not to be confused with the heroic treachery of Judith. So, again, all robbery is sin, but the frank pillage of France by the Germans is not to be degraded into any parallel with the vampire lotteries of the modern Italian Government. So, again, all rent is usury, but it may often be wise and right to receive rent for a field,—never, to receive it for a gambling table. And for application to St. George's business, finally,—so long as our National debt exists, it is well that the good Saint should buy as much stock

of it as he can; and far better that he should take the interest already agreed for, and spend it in ways helpful to the nation, than at once remit it, so as to give more encouragement to the contraction of debt.

I must needs print the last words of a delicious letter from a young lady, which I dearly want to answer, and which I think she expected me to answer,—yet gave me only her name, without her address. If she sends it—will she also tell me what sort of 'unkind or wicked' things everybody says?

"I did not mean to write all this, but I could not help it—you have been like a personal friend to me ever since I was sixteen. It *is* good of you to keep on writing your beautiful thoughts when everybody is so ungrateful, and says such unkind, wicked things about you."

LETTER LXXXI

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

BRANTWOOD, *13th August*, 1877.

THE Thirteenth,—and not a word yet from any of my lady-friends in defence of themselves! Are they going to be as mute as the Bishops?

But I have a delightful little note from the young lady whose praise of my goodness I permitted myself to quote in the last article of my August correspondence,—delightful in several ways, but chiefly because she has done, like a good girl, what she was asked to do, and told me the "wicked things that people say."

"They say you are 'unreasoning,' 'intolerably conceited,' 'self-asserting;' that you write about what you have no knowledge of (Politic. Econ.); and two or three have positively asserted, and tried to persuade me, that you are mad—really mad!! They make me so angry, I don't know what to do with myself."

The first thing to be done with yourself, I should say, my dear, is to find out *why* you are angry. You would not be so, unless you clearly saw that all these sayings were malignant sayings, and come

from people who would be very thankful if I *were* mad, or if they could find any other excuse for not doing as I bid, and as they are determined not to do. But suppose, instead of letting them make you angry, you serenely ask them what I have said that is wrong; and make them, if they are persons with any pretence to education, specify any article of my teaching, on any subject, which they think false, and give you their reason for thinking it so. Then if you cannot answer their objection yourself, send it to *me*.

You will not, however, find many of the objectors able, and it may be long before you find *one* willing, to do anything of this kind. For indeed, my dear, it is precisely because I am not self-asserting, and because the message that I have brought is not mine, that they are thus malignant against me for bringing it. "For this is the message that ye have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." Take your first epistle of St. John, and read on from that eleventh verse to the end of the third chapter: and do not wonder, or be angry any more, that "if they have called the Master of the house, Baalzebub, they call also those of his household."

I do not know what Christians generally make of that first epistle of John. As far as I notice, they usually read only from the eighth verse of the first chapter to the second of the second; and remain convinced that they may do whatever they like all their lives long, and have everything made smooth

by Christ. And even of the poor fragment they choose to read, they miss out always the first words of the second chapter, "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin *not:*" still less do they ever set against their favourite verse of absolution—"If any man sin, he hath an Advocate,"—the tremendous eighth verse of the third chapter, "He that committeth sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sinneth from the beginning," with its before and after context—"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that *doeth* righteousness is righteous;" and "whosoever *doeth* not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

But whatever modern Christians and their clergy choose to make of this epistle, there is no excuse for any rational person, who reads it carefully from beginning to end, and yet pretends to misunderstand its words. However originally confused, however afterwards interpolated or miscopied, the message of it remains clear in its three divisions: (1) That the Son of God is come in the flesh, (chap. iv. 2, v. 20, and so throughout); (2) That He hath given us understanding that we may know Him that is true, (iii. 19, iv. 13, v. 19, 20); and (3) that in this understanding we know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren (iii. 14). All which teachings have so passed from deed and truth into mere monotony of unbelieved phrase, that no English now is literal enough to bring the force of them home to my readers' minds. 'Are these, then, your sisters?' I asked of our fair English-women

concerning those two furnace-labourers. They do not answer,—or would answer, I suppose, 'Our sisters in God, certainly,' meaning thereby that they were not at all sisters in Humanity; and denying wholly that Christ, and the Sisterhood of Christendom, had "come in the Flesh."

Nay, the farthest advanced of the believers in Him are yet so misguided as to separate themselves into costumed 'Sisterhoods,' as if these were less their sisters who had forge-aprons only for costume, and no crosses hung round their necks.

But the fact is assuredly this,—that if any part or word of Christianity be true, the literal Brotherhood in Christ is true, in the Flesh as in the Spirit; and that we are bound, every one of us, by the same laws of kindness to every Christian man and woman, as to the immediate members of our own households.

And, therefore, we are bound to know who are Christians, and who are not,—and the test of such division having been made verbal, in defiance of Christ's plainest orders, the entire body of Christ has been corrupted into such disease, that there is no soundness in it, but only wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. Look back to Fors for January 1876, (vol. iii. of this edition, p. 235). How is it that no human being has answered me a word to the charge?—"You who never sowed a grain of corn, never spun a yard of thread, devour and waste to your fill, and think yourselves better creatures of God, doubtless, than this poor starved

wretch." No one has sent me answer; but see what terrific confirmation came to me, in that letter from a good, wise, and Christian man, which I printed in last Fors, who nevertheless is so deceived by the fiends concerning the whole method of division between his own class and the poor brethren, that he looks on all his rich brethren as seed of Abel, and on all his poor brethren as seed of Cain, and conceives nothing better of the labourer but that he is in his nature a murderer. "He will tear your pretty lady in pieces, and think he is doing God service." When was there ever before, in the human world, such fearful Despising of the Poor?

These things are too hard for me; but at least, as now the days shorten to the close of the seventh year, I will make this message, so far as I have yet been able to deliver it, clearly gatherable. Only, perhaps, to do so, I must deliver it again in other and gentler terms. It cannot be fully given but in the complete life and sifted writings of St. John, promised for the end of our code of foundational Scripture, (Fors, January 1876, vol. iii. p. 248, and compare July, pp. 365,)—nevertheless it may be that the rough or brief words in which it has already been given, (January 1876, pp. 236 and 250; February, pp. 256 and 261, 262; March, p. 280; April, p. 300; and, of chief importance, July, pp. 360 and 372,) have been too rough, or too strange, to be patiently received, or in their right bearing understood: and that it may be now needful for me to cease from such manner of speaking, and try to

win men to this total service of Love by praise of their partial service. Which change I have for some time thought upon, and this following letter,* —which, being a model of gentleness, has exemplary weight with me myself,—expresses better than I could without its help, what I suppose may be the lesson I have to learn.

MANCHESTER, *July 25th*, 1877.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have long felt that I ought to write to you about 'Fors Clavigera,' and others of your later books. I hesitated to write, but all that I have heard from people who love you, and who are wise enough and true enough to be helped by you, and all that I have thought in the last few years about your books,—and I have thought much about them,—convinces me that my wish is right, and my hesitation wrong. For I cannot doubt that there are not very many men who try harder to be helped by you than I do. I should not wish to write if I did not know that most of the work which you are striving to get done, ought to be done, and if I did not see that many of the means which you say ought to be used for doing it, are right means. My dulness of mind, because I am not altogether stupid, and my illness, because I do not let it weaken my will to do right, have taught me some things which you cannot know, just because you have genius and mental vigour which give you knowledge and wisdom which I cannot hope to share.

"May I not try to make my humble knowledge of

* This letter is by the author of the excellent notes on Art-Education in the July number of Fors, of which a continuation will be found in the appendix of this month.

the people, through whom alone you can act,* aid your high knowledge of what has to be done?

"Since, eight or nine years ago, I read 'Sesame and Lilies,' I have had the reverence and love for you which one feels only for the men who speak in clear words the commands which one's own nature has before spoken less clearly. And I say without self-conceit that I am trying to do the best work that I know of. It could not then be quite useless that you should know why I often put down 'Fors' and your other books in despair, and why I often feel that, in being so impatient with men whose training has been so different from yours, and who are what they are only partly by their own fault; —in forgetting that still it is true of most sinners that 'they know not what they do'; and in choosing some of the means which you do choose for gaining a good object, you are making a 'refusal' almost greater than can be made by any other man, in choosing to work for evil rather than for good.

"May I show you that sometimes 'Fors' wounds me, not because I am sinful, but because I know that the men whom you are scourging for sin, are so, only because they have not had the training, the help, which has freed you and me from that sin?

"If I were a soldier in a small army led by you against a powerful foe, would it not be my duty to tell you if words or acts of yours weakened our courage and prevented other men from joining your standard? I ask you to let me tell you, in the same spirit, of the effect of your words in 'Fors.'

* Herein lies my correspondent's chief mistake. I have neither intention, nor hope, of acting through any of the people of whom he speaks; but, if at all, with others of whom I suppose myself to know more,—not less,—than he.

"You do not know, dear Mr. Ruskin, what power for good you would have, if you would see that to you much light has been given in order that through you other men may see. You speak in anger and despair because they show that they greatly need that which it is your highest duty to patiently give them.

"Pardon me if all that I have written seems to you to be only weak.

"I have written it because I know, from the strong effect of the praise which you gave my letter in the July 'Fors,' and of the kind words in your note, that in no other way can I hope to do so much good as I should do, if anything I could say should lead you to try to be, not the leader of men entirely good and wise, free from all human weakness, but the leader, for every man and woman in England, of the goodness and wisdom which are in them, in the hard fight they have to wage against what in them is bad and foolish.

"I am, dear Mr. Ruskin, yours very truly."

This letter, I repeat, seems to me deserving of my most grave respect and consideration;* but its writer has entirely ignored the first fact respecting myself, stated in Fors at its outset—that I do not, and cannot, set myself up for a political leader; but that *my* business is to teach art, in Oxford and elsewhere;—that if any persons trust me enough to

* The following passage in a more recent note adds to this feeling on my part, and necessitates the fulness of my reply:—

"I feel so sure that what I said in my first letter very many people who love you would say,—have said inaudibly,—that the words hardly seem any longer to be mine. It was given to me to speak for many. So if you think the words printed can be of any use, they are of course entirely at your service."

obey me without scruple or debate, I can securely tell them what to do, up to a certain point, and be their 'makeshift Master' till they can find a better; but that I entirely decline any manner of political action which shall hinder me from drawing leaves and flowers.

And there is another condition, relative to this first one, in the writing of Fors, which my friend and those others who love me, for whom he speaks, have never enough observed: namely, that Fors *is a letter*, and written as a letter should be written, frankly, and as the mood, or topic, chances; so far as I finish and retouch it, which of late I have done more and more, it ceases to be what it should be, and becomes a serious treatise, which I never meant to undertake. True, the play of it, (and much of it is a kind of bitter play,) has always, as I told you before, as stern final purpose as Morgiana's dance; but the gesture of the moment must be as the humour takes me.

But this farther answer I must make, to my wounded friends, more gravely. Though, in Fors, I write what first comes into my head or heart, so long as it is true, I write no syllable, even at the hottest, without weighing the truth of it in balance accurate to the estimation of a hair. The language which seems to you exaggerated, and which it may be, therefore, inexpedient that I should continue, nevertheless expresses, in its earnestness, facts which you will find to be irrefragably true, and which no other than such forceful expression could

truly reach, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear.

Therefore 'Fors Clavigera' is not, in any wise, intended as counsel adapted to the present state of the public mind, but it is the assertion of the code of Eternal Laws which the public mind *must* eventually submit itself to, or die; and I have really no more to do with the manners, customs, feelings, or modified conditions of piety in the modern England which I have to warn of the accelerated approach either of Revolution or Destruction, than poor Jonah had with the qualifying amiabilities which might have been found in the Nineveh whose overthrow he was ordered to foretell in forty days. That I should rejoice, instead of mourning, over the falseness of such prophecy, does not at all make it at present less passionate in tone.

For instance, you have been telling me what a beloved Bishop you have got in Manchester; and so, when it was said, in Fors (vol. iii. p. 258), that "it is merely *through the quite bestial ignorance of the Moral Law* in which the English Bishops have contentedly allowed their flocks to be brought up, that any of the modern conditions of trade are possible," you thought perhaps the word 'bestial' inconsiderate! But it was the most carefully considered and accurately true epithet I could use. If you will look back to vol. ii. p. 433, you will find the following sentence quoted from the Secretary's Speech at the meeting of the Social Science Association in Glasgow in that year. It was unadvisably

allowed by me to remain in small print: it shall have large type now, being a sentence which, in the monumental vileness of it, ought to be blazoned, in letters of stinking gas-fire, over the condemned cells of every felon's prison in Europe:—

"MAN HAS THEREFORE BEEN DEFINED AS AN ANIMAL THAT EXCHANGES. IT WILL BE SEEN, HOWEVER, THAT HE NOT ONLY EXCHANGES, BUT FROM THE FACT OF HIS BELONGING, IN PART, TO THE ORDER CARNIVORA, THAT HE ALSO INHERITS TO A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE THE DESIRE TO POSSESS WITHOUT EXCHANGING; OR, IN OTHER WORDS, BY FRAUD OR VIOLENCE, WHEN SUCH CAN BE USED FOR HIS OWN ADVANTAGE, WITHOUT DANGER TO HIMSELF."

Now, it is not at all my business, nor my gift, to 'lead' the people who utter, or listen to, this kind of talk, to better things. I have no hope for them, —any quantity of pity you please, as I have also for wasps, and puff-adders:—but not the least expectation of ever being able to do them any good. My business is simply to state in accurate, not violent, terms, the nature of their minds, which they themselves ("out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant") assert to be 'bestial,'— to show the fulfilment, in them, of the words of prophecy: "What they know naturally, as brute-beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves,"— and to fasten down their sayings in a sure place, for eternal scorn, driving them into the earth they are born of, as with Jael's hammer. And this I have

held for an entirely stern duty, and if it seems to have been ever done in uncharitable contempt, my friends should remember how much, in the doing of it, I have been forced to read the writings of men whose natural stupidity is enhanced always by their settled purpose of maintaining the interests of Fraud and Force,* (see Fors of January 1877, page 5, line 12), into such frightful conditions of cretinism, that having any business with them and their talk is to me exactly as if all the slavering Swiss populace of the high-air-cure establishment at Interlaken had been let loose into my study at once. The piece of Bastiat, for instance, with analysis of which I began Fors seven years ago,—what can you put beside it of modern trade-literature, for stupidity, set off with dull cunning?—or this, which in good time has been sent me by Fors, (perhaps for a coping-stone of all that I need quote from these men, that so I may end the work of nailing down scarecrows of idiotic soul, and be left free to drive home the fastenings of sacred law)—what can you put beside *this*, for blasphemy, among all the outcries of the low-foreheaded and long-tongued races of demented men?—

"HAD MANKIND GIVEN OBEDIENCE TO THAT PROHIBITION,† THE RACE WOULD LONG SINCE

* That is to say, the "framework of Society." It is a perfectly conscientious feeling on their part. We will reason as far as we can, without saying anything that shall involve any danger to "property."

† The Prohibition of Usury.

HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH. FOR WITHOUT INTEREST THE ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL IS IMPOSSIBLE, WITHOUT CAPITAL THERE CAN BE NO CO-OPERATION OF ANTERIOR AND PRESENT LABOUR, WITHOUT THIS CO-OPERATION THERE CAN BE NO SOCIETY, AND WITHOUT SOCIETY MAN CANNOT EXIST." (Bastiat, "Harmonies of Political Economy," vol. ii., page 165. English edition.)

With this passage, and some farther and final pushing home of my challenge to the Bishops of England, which must be done, assuredly, in no unseemly temper or haste,—it seems probable to me that the accusing work of Fors may close. Yet I have to think of others of its readers, before so determining, of whom one writes to me this month, in good time, as follows:—

"In reading the last (June) 'Fors,' I see—oh, so sorrowfully!—that you have been pained by hearing 'complaints' that should never have been felt—much less spoken, and least of all for you to hear. It is bad enough for those who love every word of your teaching to find 'Fors' mis-read. But I for one feel it to be just unpardonable that anything so mistaken should reach you as to lead you to think you are 'multiplying words in vain.'

"'In vain'?—Dearest Master, surely, surely you know that far and near, many true hearts (who—known or unknown to you—call you by that sacred name) watch hungrily for the coming of your monthly letter, and find it Bread, and Light.

"Believe me, if the 'well-to-do'—who have never felt the consequences of the evils you seek to cure—'can't understand' you, there are those who can, and do.

"Perhaps, for instance, your 'well-to-do friends,' who can get any fruit they wish for, in season or out of season, from their own garden or hothouse, may think the 'Mother Law' of Venice about Fruit only beautiful and interesting from an antiquarian point of view, and not as having any practical value for English people to-day: but suppose that one of them could step so far down as to *be* one of 'the *poor*' (*not* 'the working' classes) in our own large towns—and so living, to suffer a fever, when fruit is a necessity, and find, as I have done, that the price of even the commonest kinds made it just impossible for the very poor to buy it—would not he or she, after such an experience, look on the matter as one, not only of personal, but of wide importance? I begin to think it is only through their own need, that ordinary people know the needs of others. Thus, if a man and his wife living, with no family, on say ten shillings per week, find that in a town they can't afford to buy, and can get no garden in which to grow fruit—they will know at once that their neighbours who on the same sum must bring up half a dozen children, will have to do without vegetables as well as fruit; and having felt the consequences of their own privation, they will know that the children will soon—probably—suffer with skin and other diseases, so serious as to make them

ask, *why* are fruit and vegetables so much scarcer and dearer than they were when we were children? And once any one begins to honestly puzzle out that, and similar questions (as I tried to do before 'Fors' was given us), they will be, I know, beyond all telling, thankful for the guidance of 'Fors,' and quite ready to 'understand' it.

"Ah me! if only the 'well-to-do' would *really* try to find an answer, only to the seemingly simple question asked above, I would have more hope than now for the next generation of 'the lower classes.' For they would find that dear vegetables means semi-starvation to countless poor families. One of the first facts I learnt when I came here was,—'Poor folks' children don't get much to eat all winter but bread and potatoes.' Yet, last October, I one day gave twopence for three ordinary potatoes; and, all winter, could buy no really good ones. Under such conditions, many children, and infirm and sick people, could be but half fed; and half-fed children mean feeble, undersized, diseased men and women, who will become fathers and mothers of sickly children,—and where will the calamity end? Surely the 'food supply' of the people *is* every one's business. ('That can't concern you, my dear,' is the putting down we women get, you know, if we ask the 'why?' of a wrong to other people.) I can't, when I hear of sickly children, but ask, very sadly, what kind of workmen and soldiers and sailors will they and their children be in another century?

"You will think I am looking a long way forward; yet if one begins only to puzzle out this question (the scarcity of fruit and vegetables), they will find it takes them back, far away from towns, far off the 'very poor,' until they come to the beginning of the mischief, as you show us; and then the well-to-do will find they *have* had much to do with the question, and find too a meaning in the oft-read words, 'We are every one members one of another.'

"There, I fear I'm very rude, but I'm not a little angry when people who are blind say there is no light to see by. I've written so much, that I'm now afraid I shall tire you too much: but I do so want to tell you what I feel now, even more than when I began—no words *can* tell you—*how* close, and true, and tried a friend 'Fors' is.

"Last winter there was great distress in this town. Many persons were thrown out of employment because there was 'great depression in the shoe trade': of course among some classes there was great suffering. Yet, with children literally starving because their fathers could get no work to do, all the winter through, and up to the present time, a 'traction engine' (I think they call it) was at work levelling, etc., the streets, and a machine brush swept them,—past the very door of a house where there was a family of little children starving. 'They have pawned about everything in the house but the few clothes they have on, and have had no food since yesterday morning,' I was told on

Christmas Day. All the winter through I could not get one person who talked to me of 'the distress in the shoe trade' to see that it was only like applying a plaster to a broken limb, instead of setting the bone, to give coal and bread tickets to these poor starving people, and was not really 'feeding the hungry.' People are, as far as *I* know, *never* half fed by such means, but over-fed one day in the week, and left foodless the other six.*

"I talked earnestly to a 'Board' schoolmistress who is 'educating' near three hundred children; but, alas! she persisted in saying, 'It would be a disgraceful thing if we had not the engine and brush, when other towns have got them long ago.' Will you not believe that in such a winter it was good to get 'Fors'? People do listen to you."

I should not have given this letter large type for the portions referring to myself; but I wish its statement of the distress for food among the poorer classes—distress which is the final measure of decrease of National wealth—to be compared with the triumphant words of Mr. Goldwin Smith in contemplation of the increased number of chimneys at Reading, (and I suppose also of the model gaol which conceals from the passing traveller the ruins of its Abbey). And I will pray my first correspondent to believe me, that if once he thoroughly comprehends the quantity of fallacy and of mischief

* Compare Letter LXI. (vol. iii. p. 229).

involved in these thoughtless expressions of vulgar triumph, and sets himself to contradict and expose them, he will no longer be sensitive to the less or more of severity in the epithets given to their utterers. The following passage from another of his letters on this subject, with my following general answer, may, I think, sufficiently conclude what is needful to be said on this subject.

"To quite free my mind from the burden which it has long carried, I will speak, too, of what you have said of Goldwin Smith, and Mill. I know that men who fail to see that political change is purely mischievous * are so far 'geese'; but I know, too, that it is wrong to call them geese. They are not entirely so: and of the geese or half-geese who follow them in flocks, about the noblest quality is that they are loyal to and admire their leaders, and are hurt and made angry when names which they do not like are used of those leaders."

Well, my dear sir, I solemnly believe that the less they like it, the better my work has been done. For you will find, if you think deeply of it, that the chief of all the curses of this unhappy age is the universal gabble of its fools, and of the flocks that follow them, rendering the quiet voices of the wise men of all past time inaudible. This is, first, the result of the invention of printing, and of the easy power and extreme pleasure to vain persons of seeing themselves in print. When it took a twelvemonth's hard work to make a single volume legible,

* I had not the slightest intention of alluding to *this* failure of theirs, which happens to be my own also.

men considered a little the difference between one book and another; but now, when not only anybody can get themselves made legible through any quantity of volumes, in a week, but the doing so becomes a means of living to them, and they can fill their stomachs with the foolish foam of their lips,* the universal pestilence of falsehood fills the mind of the world as cicadas do olive-leaves, and the first necessity for our mental government is to extricate from among the insectile noise, the few books and words that are Divine. And this has been my main work from my youth up,—not caring to speak my own words, but to discern, whether in painting or scripture, what is eternally good and vital, and to strike away from it pitilessly what is worthless and venomous. So that now, being old, and thoroughly practised in this trade, I know either of a picture—a book—or a speech, quite securely whether it is good or not, as a cheesemonger knows cheese;—and I have not the least mind to try to make wise men out of fools, or silk purses out of sows' ears; but my one swift business is to brand them of base quality, and get them out of the way, and I do not care a cobweb's weight whether I hurt the followers of these men or not,—totally ignoring them, and caring only to get the facts concerning the men themselves

* Just think what a horrible condition of life it is that any man of common vulgar wit, who knows English grammar, can get, for a couple of sheets of chatter in a magazine, two-thirds of what Milton got altogether for 'Paradise Lost!' all this revenue being of course stolen from the labouring poor, who are the producers of all wealth. (Compare the central passage of Fors XI., vol. i. p. 212.)

fairly and roundly stated for the people whom I have real power to teach. And for qualification of statement, there is neither time nor need. Of course there are few writers capable of obtaining any public attention who have not some day or other said something rational; and many of the foolishest of them are the amiablest, and have all sorts of minor qualities of a most recommendable character, —propriety of diction, suavity of temper, benevolence of disposition, wide acquaintance with literature, and what not. But the one thing I have to assert concerning them is that they are men of eternally worthless intellectual quality, who never ought to have spoken a word in this world, or to have been heard in it, out of their family circles; and whose books are merely so much floating fogbank, which the first breath of sound public health and sense will blow back into its native ditches for ever.

We have now of entire property, five thousand Consols, (and something over): eight hundred pounds balance in cash: thirteen acres freehold at Abbey Dale,—twenty at Bewdley, two at Barmouth, and the Walkley Museum building, ground, and contents.

I regret that the Abbey Dale property still stands in my name; but our solicitors have not yet replied to my letter requesting them to appoint new Trustees; and I hope that the registration of the Guild may soon enable me to transfer the property at once to the society as a body.

I ought, by rights, as the Guild's *master*, to be at present in Abbey Dale itself; but as the Guild's *founder*, I have

quite other duties. I have the Guild's schools to think of, and while I know there are thousands of men in England able to conduct our business affairs better than I, when once they see it their duty to do so, I do not believe there is another man in England able to organize our elementary lessons in Natural History and Art. And I am therefore wholly occupied in examining the growth of Anagallis tenella, and completing some notes on St. George's Chapel at Venice; and the Dalesmen must take care of themselves for the present.

The following more detailed exposition of my Manchester correspondent's designs for the founding of a museum for working men in that city, should be read with care. My own comments, as before, are meant only to extend, not to invalidate, his proposals.

"It is many years since the brightest sunshine in Italy and Switzerland began to make me see chiefly the gloom and foulness of Manchester; since the purest music has been mingled for my ear with notes of the obscene songs which are all the music known to thousands of our workpeople; since the Tale of Troy and all other tales have been spoiled for me by the knowledge that 'for our working classes no such tales exist.' Do not doubt that I know that those words are sorrowful,—that I know that while they are true, gladness cannot often be felt except by fools and knaves. We are so much accustomed to allow conditions of life to exist which make health impossible, and to build infirmaries and hospitals for a few of the victims of those conditions;—to allow people to be drawn into crime by irresistible temptations, which we might have removed, and to provide prison chaplains for the most troublesome criminals;—our beneficent activity is so apt to take the

form of what, in Mrs. Fry's case, Hood so finely called 'nugatory teaching,' that it is quite useless to urge people of our class to take up the work of making healthy activity of body and mind possible for the working classes of our towns, and a life less petty than that which we are now living, possible too for the rich. They prefer to work in hospitals and prisons. (*a*) The most hospital-like and therefore inviting name which I can find for the work which I have mentioned—a work to which I shall give what strength I have—is the 'cure of drunkenness.' Under the 'scientific treatment of drunkenness' I can find a place for every change that seems to me to be most urgently needed in Manchester and all manufacturing towns. Pray do not think that I am jesting, or that I would choose a name for the sake of deception. The name I have chosen quite accurately describes one aspect of the work to be done. I must write an explanation of the work, as I am not rich enough to do more than a small part by myself.

"There is, I believe, no doubt that in the last seventy or eighty years the higher and middle classes of English people, formerly as remarkable for drunkenness as our

(*a*) Most true. This morbid satisfaction of consciences by physicking people on their deathbeds, and preaching to them under the gallows, may be ranked among the most insidious mischiefs of modern society. My correspondent must pardon St. George for taking little interest in any work which proposes to itself, even in the most expanded sense, merely curative results. Is it wholly impossible for him to substitute, as a scope of energy, for the "cure of drunkenness," the "distribution of food"? I heard only yesterday of an entirely well-conducted young married woman fainting in the street for hunger. If my correspondent would address himself to find everybody enough of Meat, he would incidentally, but radically, provide against anybody's having a superabundance of Drink.

workmen now are, (*b*) have become much more temperate. I try to show what are the causes of the change, and how these causes, which do not yet affect the poor, may be made to reach them. I must tell you very briefly what we are already doing in Manchester, and what I shall try to get done. The work of smoke prevention goes on very slowly. The Noxious Vapours Association will have to enforce the law, which, if strictly enforced, would make all mill chimneys almost smokeless. But the 'nuisance sub-committees' will not enforce the law. We shall show as clearly and effectively as possible how grossly they neglect their duty. I believe that in a year or two all that the law can help us to do will be done, and the air will then be much purer. (*c*)

* * * * * *

"Music is one of the things most needed. The mood, which I know well, must be very well known by workpeople—the mood in which one does not wish to improve one's mind, or to talk, but only to rest. All men must know that temptation is never harder to resist than then. *We* have music to protect us, which calls up our best thoughts and feeling and memories. The poor have—the public-house,—where their thoughts and feelings are at the mercy of any one who chooses to talk or sing obscenely; and they are ordered to leave even that poor refuge if they don't order beer as often as the landlord thinks they ought to do. In every large English town there are scores of rich people who know what Austrian beer-gardens are,—how much better than anything

(*b*) Compare 'The Crown of Wild Olive,' §§ 148, 149.

(*c*) I omit part of the letter here: because to St. George's work it is irrelevant. St. George forbids, not the smoke only, but much more—the fire.

in England; and yet nowhere has one been started. I am trying now to get a few men to join me in opening one. I should prefer to have tea and coffee and cocoa instead of beer, as our beer is much more stupefying than that which is drunk in Austria. All that is needed is a large, well-lighted, well-ventilated room; (*d*) where every evening three or four good musicians shall play such music as one hears in Austria,—music of course chosen by us, and not, as it is in music-halls, virtually by the lowest blackguards. (*e*) A penny or twopence will be paid at the door, to quite cover the cost of the music; and tea, etc., will be sold to people who want it; but no

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(*d*) Alas, my kindly friend—do you think there is no difference between a 'room' and a 'garden' then? The *Garden* is the essential matter; and the Daylight. Not the music, nor the beer, nor even the coffee.

(*e*) I will take up this subject at length, with Plato's help, in next Fors. Meantime, may I briefly ask if it would not be possible, instead of keeping merely the bad *music* out of the hall, to keep the bad *men* out of it? Suppose the music, instead of being charged twopence for, were given of pure grace;—suppose, for instance, that rich people, who now endeavour to preserve memory of their respected relations, by shutting the light out of their church windows with the worst glass that ever good sand was spoiled into—would bequeath an annual sum to play a memorial tune of a celestial character?—or in any other pious way share some of their own operatic and other musical luxury with the poor; or even appoint a Christian lady-visitor, with a voice, to sing to them, instead of preach?—and then, as aforesaid, instead of permitting seats to be obtained for twopence, make the entry to such entertainments a matter of compliment, sending tickets of admission, as for Almack's, to persons who, though moneyless, might yet be perceived to belong to a penurious type of good society, and so exclude 'blackguards,' whether lowest or highest, altogether. Would not the selection of the pieces become easier under such conditions?

one will have to order anything for 'the good of the house.' Then there will be a place where a decent workman can take his wife or daughter, without having to pay more than he can well afford, and where he will be perfectly sure that they will hear no foul talk or songs. I don't know of any place of which that can now be said.

"Mr. Ward probably told you of my plans for a museum. I shall be very grateful to you if you will tell me whether or not they are good. (*f*) I want to make art again a teacher. I know that while our town children are allowed to live in filthy houses, to wear filthy clothes, to play in filthy streets, look up to a filthy sky, and love filthy parents, there can be very little in them—compared, at least, with what under other conditions there would be—that books, or art, or after-life can 'educate.' But still there is something,—far more than we have any right to expect. How very many of these children, when they grow up, do not become drunkards, do not beat their wives! When I see how good those already grown up are, how kind, as a rule, to each other, how tender to their children, I feel not only shame that we have left them unhelped so long; but, too, hope, belief, that in our day we can get as many people with common kindness and common sense, to work together, as will enable us to give them effective help.

"After all, town children sometimes see brightness. To-day the sky was radiantly blue: looking straight up, it was hardly possible to see that there was smoke

(*f*) *Very* good;—but the main difficulty which we have to overcome is, not to form plans for a museum, but to find the men leisure to muse. My correspondent has not yet answered my question, why we, and they, have less than the Greeks had.

in the air, though my eyes were full of 'blacks' when I left off watching the clouds drift.

"So long as people are helpful to each other and tender to their children, is there not something in them that art can strengthen and ennoble? Can we not find pictures, old or new, that will bring before them in beautiful forms their best feelings and thoughts? I speak of pictures with great diffidence. For what in them directly reveals noble human feeling I care deeply; but my eyes and brain are dull for both form and colour. I venture to speak of them at all to you only because I have thought much of the possibility of using them as means for teaching people who can barely read. Surely pictures must be able to tell tales. (*g*) even to people whose eyes have been trained in a Manchester back street. The plan which I wish to try is, to take, with the help of other men, a warehouse with some well-lighted walls. On these I would hang first the tale of the life of Christ, told by the copies published by the Arundel Society, as far as they can be made to tell it; and with the gaps, left by them, filled by copies made specially for us. Under the whole series the same history would be told in words, and under each

(*g*) Yes, provided the tales be true, and the art honest. Is my correspondent wholly convinced that the tales he means to tell are true? For if they are not, he will find no good whatever result from an endeavour to amuse the grown-up working men of England with mediæval fiction, however elegant. And if they are true, perhaps there is other business to be done before painting them.

Respecting the real position of the modern English mind with respect to its former religion, I beg my readers' accuratest attention to Mr. Mallock's faultlessly logical article in the *Nineteenth Century* for this month, "Is life worth living?"

picture there would be a full explanation. There are hundreds of English people who have never heard this tale; but it is the tale that is better known than any other. Other tales told by pictures, I hope, can be found.

"You speak hopelessly of the chance of finding painters for the actions of great Englishmen, but could you not find painters for English hills and woods? (*h*) I should like to make other people, and myself, look with their brains, eventually even with their hearts, at what they now see only with their eyes. So I would have drawings made of the prettiest places near Manchester to which people go on holidays. They should be so painted that, if rocks are seen, it may be easy to know what kind of rocks they are; if trees, what kind of trees. Under or near these pictures, there should be sketches in outline giving the names of all the principal things—'clump of oaks,' 'new red sandstone.' On the opposite wall I would have cases of specimens—large-scale drawings of leaves of trees, of their blossom and seeds. For pictures of hills there should be such plates, showing the leading lines of the hills, as you give in the 'Mountain' volume of 'Modern Painters.' It might help to make

(*h*) Possibly; but as things are going we shall soon have our people incredulous of the existence of these also. If we cannot keep the fields and woods themselves, the paintings of them will be useless. If you can, they are your best museum. It is true that I am arranging a museum in Sheffield, but not in the least with any hope of regenerating Sheffield by means of it;—only that it may be ready for Sheffield, otherwise regenerated, to use. Nor should I trouble myself even so far, but that I know my own gifts lie more in the way of cataloguing minerals than of managing men.

The rest of my correspondent's letter, to its close, is of extreme value and interest.

us think of the wonderfulness of the earth if we had drawings—say of a valley in the coal measure district as it now is, and another of what it probably was when the coal plants were still growing. If each town had such a series of pictures and explanatory drawings, they might be copied by chromo-lithography, and exchanged.

"We would have the photographs which you have described in 'Fors,' or, better, coloured copies of the pictures, with all that you have written about them. Might we not have also good chromo-lithographs of good drawings, so that we might learn what to buy for our houses?

"I speak as if I thought that one museum could do measurable good in a huge city. I speak so because I hope that there are rich people enough, sick at heart of the misery which they now helplessly watch, to open other museums, if the first were seen to do good; or enough such people to lead the poor in forcing the authorities of the city to pay for museums from the rates.

"I would have good music in the museum every evening, and I would have it open on Sunday afternoons, and let fine music be played then too. I would do this for the same reason which makes me think little of 'temples.' How can churches help us much now? I have *heard no preacher tell us, in calmness or in anger, that it is the duty of our class—still the ruling class—to give the people light and pure air, and all that light and pure air, and only they, would bring with them.* (*i*) Until preachers have the wisdom to see, and the courage to say, that if while the people are being stifled, in body and mind, for air now, and

(*i*) Italics mine.

only *may* want more water seven years hence, and probably will not want a Gothic town-hall even seventy years hence, we spend half a million pounds sterling on a town-hall, and I don't know how many millions for your Thirlmere water, we are guilty of grievous sin,—until they see and say this, how can the religion of which they are the priests help us? The poor and the rich are one people. If we can prevent the poor from being brutes, and do not, we are brutes too, though we be rich and educated brutes. Where two or three, or two or three hundred such, are gathered together—it matters not in what name—God is *not* in the midst of them. Some day I hope we shall be able again to meet in churches and to thank God—the poor for giving them good rulers, and we for giving us the peace which we shall not find until we have taken up our duty of ruling. At present many workmen, after drinking on Saturday till public-houses close, lie in bed on Sunday until public-houses open. Then they rise, and begin to drink again. Till churches will help many, I want museums to help a few. Till Sunday be a day which brings to us all a livelier sense that we are bound to God and man with bonds of love and duty, I would have it be at least a day when working men may see that there are some things in the world very good. The first day will do as well as the seventh for that. How can people, trained as our working classes now are, rest on Sunday? To me it seems that *our* Sunday rest, which finds us with stores of knowledge and wisdom that we could not have, had not hundreds of people worked for us, is as much out of the reach of workmen as the daintily cooked cold meats which we eat on Sunday when we wish to be very good to our servants."

LETTER LXXXII

HEAVENLY CHOIRS

BRANTWOOD, 13*th September*, 1877.

I REALLY thought Fors would have been true to its day, this month; but just as it was going to press, here is something sent me by my much-honoured friend Frederic Gale, (who told me of the race-horse and kitten,)* which compels me to stop press to speak of it.

It is the revise of a paper which will be, I believe, in *Baily's Magazine* by the time this Fors is printed; —a sketch of English manners and customs in the days of Fielding; (whom Mr. Gale and I agree in holding to be a truly moral novelist, and worth any quantity of modern ones since Scott's death,—be they who they may).

But my friend, though an old Conservative, seems himself doubtful whether things may not have been a little worse managed, in some respects, then, than they are now: and whether some improvements may not really have taken place in the roads,—postage, and the like: and chiefly his faith in the olden time

* [See Letter LXXIX.]

seems to have been troubled by some reminiscences he has gathered of the manner of inflicting capital punishment in the early Georgian epochs. Which manner, and the views held concerning such punishment, which dictate the manner, are indeed among the surest tests of the nobility or vileness of men: therefore I will ask my friend, and my readers, to go with me a little farther back than the days of Fielding, if indeed they would judge of the progress, or development, of human thought on this question; —and hear what, both in least and in utmost punishment, was ordained by *literally* 'Rhadamanthine' law, and remained in force over that noblest nation who were the real Institutors of Judgment,* some eight hundred years, from the twelfth to the fourth century before Christ.

I take from Müller's 'Dorians,' Book III., chap. ii., the following essential passages, (italics always mine):—

"*Property* was, according to the Spartan notions, to be *looked upon as a matter of indifference;* in the decrees and institutions attributed to Lycurgus, no mention was made of this point, and the ephors were permitted to judge according to their own notions of equity. The ancient legislators had an evident repugnance to any strict regulations on this subject; thus Zaleucus—who however first made particular enactments concerning the right of property—*expressly interdicted certificates of debt.*

* The Mosaic law never having been observed by the Jews in literalness.

"The ephors decided all disputes concerning money and property, as well as in accusations against responsible officers, provided they were not of a criminal nature; the kings decided in cases of heiresses and adoptions. Public offences, *particularly of the kings and other authorities*, were decided by an extreme course of judicature. The popular assembly had probably no judicial" (meaning only elective) "functions: disputes concerning the succession to the throne were referred to it only after ineffectual attempts to settle them, and it then passed a decree.

"Among the various punishments which occur, the fines levied on property would appear ridiculous in any other state than Sparta, on account of their extreme lowness. Perseus, in his treatise on the Lacedæmonian government, says that 'the judge immediately condemns the rich man to the loss of a *dessert* (ἐπαΐκλον); the poor he orders to bring a reed, or a rush, or laurel leaves for a public banquet.' Nicocles the Lacedæmonian says upon the same subject, 'when the ephor has heard all the witnesses, he either acquits the defendant or condemns him; and the successful plaintiff slightly fines him in a cake, or some laurel leaves,' which were used to give a relish to the cakes.

"Banishment was probably never a regular punishment in Sparta, for the law could hardly compel a person to do that which, if he had done it voluntarily, would have been punished with death. On the other hand, banishment exempted a person from the most severe punishments, and, according to the principles of the Greeks, preserved him from every persecution; so that even a person who was declared an outlaw by the Amphictyons was thought secure when out of the country. There is no instance in the history of Sparta

of any individual being banished for political reasons, so long as the ancient constitution continued.

"The laws respecting the penalty of death which prevailed in the Grecian, and especially in the Doric, states, were derived from Delphi. They were entirely founded upon the ancient rite of expiation, by which a limit was first set to the fury of revenge, and a fixed mode of procedure in such cases was established.

"The Delphian institutions were, however, doubtless connected with those of Crete, where Rhadamanthus was reported by ancient tradition to have first established courts of justice, and a system of law, (the larger and more important part of which, in early times, is always the criminal law).* Now as Rhadamanthus is said to have made exact retaliation the fundamental principle of his code, it cannot be doubted, after what has been said in the second book on the connexion of the worship of Apollo, and its expiatory rites, with Crete, that in this island the harshness of that principle was early softened by religious ceremonies, in which victims and libations took the place of the punishment which should have fallen on the head of the offender himself.

"The punishment of death was inflicted either by strangulation, in a room of the public prison, or by throwing the criminal into the Cæadas,† a ceremony

* I have enclosed this sentence in brackets, because it is the German writer's parenthesis, from his own general knowledge; and it shows how curiously unconscious he had remained of the real meaning of the 'retaliation' of Rhadamanthus, which was of good for good, not of evil for evil. See vol. i. of this edition, pp. 469, 470.

† I did not know myself what the Cæadas was; so wrote to my dear old friend, Osborne Gordon, who tells me it was probably a chasm in the limestone rock; but his letter is so interesting that I keep it for 'Deucalion.'

which was always performed by night. It was also in ancient times the law of Athens that no execution should take place in the daytime. So also the Senate of the Æolic Cume (whose antiquated institutions have been already mentioned) decided criminal cases during the night, and voted with covered balls, nearly in the same manner as the kings of the people of Atlantis, in the Critias of Plato. These must not be considered as oligarchical contrivances for the undisturbed execution of severe sentences, but they must be attributed to the dread of pronouncing and putting into execution the sentence of death, and to an unwillingness to bring the terrors of that penalty before the eye of day. A similar repugnance is expressed in the practice of Spartan Gerusia, which never passed sentence of death without several days' deliberation, nor ever without the most conclusive testimony."

These being pre-Christian views of the duty and awfulness of capital punishment—(we all know the noblest instance of that waiting till the sun was behind the mountains)—here is the English eighteenth century view of it, as a picturesque and entertaining ceremony.

"As another instance of the matter-of-course way of doing business in the olden time, an old Wiltshire shepherd pointed out to a brother of mine a place on the Downs where a highwayman was hung, on the borders of Wilts and Hants. 'It was quite a pretty sight,' said the old man; 'for the sheriffs and javelin-men came a-horseback, and they all stopped at the Everleigh Arms for refreshment, as they had travelled a long way.' 'Did the man who was going to be hanged have

anything?' 'Lord, yes, as much strong beer as he liked; and we drank to his health; and then they hung he, and buried him under the gallows.'"

Now I think the juxtaposition of these passages may enough show my readers how vain it is to attempt to reason from any single test, however weighty in itself,—to general conclusions respecting national progress. It would be as absurd to conclude, from the passages quoted, that the English people in the days of George the Third were in all respects brutalized, and in all respects inferior to the Dorians in the days of Rhadamanthus, as it is in the modern philanthropist of the Newgatory* school to conclude that we are now entering on the true Millennium, because we can't bear the idea of hanging a rascal for his crimes, though we are quite ready to drown any quantity of honest men for the sake of turning a penny on our insurance; and though (as I am securely informed) from ten to twelve public executions of entirely innocent persons take place in Sheffield, annually, by crushing the persons condemned under large pieces of sandstone thrown at them by steam-engines; in order that the moral improvement of the public may be secured, by furnishing them with carving-knives sixpence a

* As a literary study, this exquisite pun of Hood's, (quoted by my correspondent in last Fors,) and intensely characteristic of the man, deserves the most careful memory, as showing what a noble and instructive lesson even a pun may become, when it is deep in its purpose, and founded on a truth which is perfectly illustrated by the seeming equivocation.

dozen cheaper than, without these executions, would be possible.

All evidences of progress or decline have therefore to be collected in mass,—then analyzed with extreme care,—then weighed in the balance of the Ages, before we can judge of the meaning of any one:—and I am glad to have been forced by Fors to the notice of my friend's paper, that I may farther answer a complaint of my Manchester correspondent, of which I have hitherto taken no notice, that I under-estimate the elements of progress in Manchester. My answer is, in very few words, that I am quite aware there are many amiable persons in Manchester—and much general intelligence. But, taken as a whole, I perceive that Manchester can produce no good art, and no good literature; it is falling off even in the quality of its cotton; it has reversed, and vilified in loud lies, every essential principle of political economy; it is cowardly in war, predatory in peace; and as a corporate body, plotting at last to steal, and sell, for a profit,* the waters of Thirlmere and clouds of Helvellyn.

* The reader must note—though I cannot interrupt the text to explain, that the Manchester (or typically commercial,—compare Fors, Letter LXX., vol. iii., p. 415,) heresy in political economy is twofold,—first, what may specifically be called the Judasian heresy,—that the value of a thing is what it will fetch in the market: "This ointment might have been sold for much,—this lake may be sold for much,—this England may be sold for much,—this Christ may be sold for—little; but yet, let us have what we can get," etc.; and, secondly, what may specifically be called the 'heresy of the tables'—*i.e.* of the money-changers—that money begets money, and that

And therefore I have no serious doubt that the Rhadamanthine verdict * on that society, being distinctly retributive, would be, not that the Lake of Thirlmere should be brought to the top of the town of Manchester, but that the town of Manchester, or at least the Corporation thereof, should be put at the bottom of the Lake of Thirlmere.

You think I jest, do you? as you did when I said I should like to destroy the New Town of Edinburgh, and the city of New York?

My friends, I did not jest then, and do not, now. I am no Roman Catholic,—yet I would not willingly steal holy water out of a font, to sell;—and being no Roman Catholic, I hold the hills and vales of my native land to be true temples of God, and their

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exchange is the root of profit. Whereas only labour is the root of profit, and exchange merely causes loss to the producer by tithe to the pedlar.

Whereupon I may also note, for future comparison of old and new times, the discovery made by another of my good and much-regarded friends, Mr. Alfred Tylor, who is always helping me, one way or other; and while lately examining some documents of the old Guilds, for I forget what purpose of his own, it suddenly flashed out upon him, as a general fact concerning them, that they never looked for 'profit'—(and, practically, never got it,)—but only cared that their work should be good, and only expected for it, and got surely, day by day, their daily bread.

* More properly, in this case, the *Minoan* verdict. Though I do not care for 'discoveries,' and never plume myself on them, but only on clear perception of long-known facts; yet, as I leave my work behind me, I think it right to note of new things in it what seem to me worthy,—and the analysis of the powers of the three Judges,—Minos, the Punisher of Evil; Rhadamanthus, the Rewarder of Good; and Æacus, the Divider of Possession, is,—I believe, mine exclusively.

waves and clouds holier than the dew of the baptistery, and the incense of the altar.

And to these Manchester robbers, I would solemnly speak again the words which Plato wrote for prelude to the laws forbidding crimes against the Gods,—though crimes to him inconceivable as taking place among educated men. "Oh, thou wonderful," (meaning wonderful in wretchedness,) "this is no human evil that is upon thee, neither one sent by the Gods, but a mortal pestilence and œstrus * begotten among men from old and uncleansed iniquities: wherefore, when such dogmas and desires come into thy soul, that thou desirest to steal sacred things, seek first to the shrines for purification, and then for the society of good men; and hear of them what they say, and with no turning or looking back, fly out of the fellowship of evil men:—and if, in doing this, thy evil should be lightened, well; but if not, then holding death the fairer state for thee, depart thou out of this life."

For indeed † "the legislator knows quite well that to such men there is 'no profit' in the continuance of their lives; and that they would do a double good to the rest of men, if they would take their

* There is no English word for this Greek one, symbolical of the forms of stinging fury which men must be transformed to beasts, before they can feel.

† The closing sentence from this point is farther on in the book. I give Jowett's translation, p. 373.—The inverted commas only are mine.

departure, inasmuch as they would be an example to other men not to offend, and they would relieve the city of bad citizens."

I return now to what I began a week ago, thinking then, as I said, to be in the best of time. And truly the lateness of Fors during the last four or five months has not been owing to neglect of it, but to my taking more pains with it, and spending, I am grieved to say, some ten or twelve days out of the month in the writing of it, or finishing sentences, when press correction and all should never take more than a week, else it gets more than its due share of my shortening life. And this has been partly in duty, partly in vanity, not remembering enough my often-announced purpose to give more extracts from classical authors, in statement of necessary truth; and trust less to myself; therefore to-day, instead of merely using Plato's help, in talking of music, I shall give little more than his own words, only adding such notes as are necessary for their application to modern needs. But what he has said is so scattered up and down the two great treatises of the Republic and the Laws, and so involved, for the force and basis of it, with matter of still deeper import, that, arrange it how best I may, the reader must still be somewhat embarrassed by abruptness of transition from fragment to fragment, and must be content to take out of each what it brings. And indeed this arrangement is more difficult because, for my present purposes, I have to begin with what Plato

concludes in,—for *his* dialogues are all excavatory work, throwing aside loose earth, and digging to rock foundation; but *my* work is edificatory, and I have to lay the foundation first. So that to-day I must begin with his summary of conclusions in the twelfth book of the Laws,* namely, that

"the Ruler must know the principle of good which is common to the four cardinal virtues, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance; and which makes each and all of them virtue: and he must know, of what is beautiful and good, the principle that makes it beautiful, and makes it good; and knowing this, he must be able to set it forth first in words, and follow it out in action. Therefore, since of all beautiful things one of the most beautiful is the fact of the existence and power of the Gods; although it may be pardoned to the common people of the city that they know these things only by fame, no man may be a governor who has not laboured to acquire every faith concerning the existence of the Gods: and there should be no permission to choose, as a guardian of the laws, any one who is not a divine man, and one who has wholly gone through the sum of labour in such things,"—(meaning, having laboured until he has fought his way into true faith).

* My own edition of Plato is Bekker's, printed by Valpy, 1826; and my own references, made during the last fifteen years, are all to page and line of this octavo edition, and will be given here,—after naming the book of each series; thus, in the present case, Laws, XII. 632. 9, meaning the twelfth book of the Laws, 9th line of 632nd page in Bekker's 8th volume; but with this reference I will also give always, in brackets, that to the chapter in Stephanus, so that the full reference here is,—Laws, XII. 632. 9 (966).

"And there are two lines of knowledge by which we arrive at belief in the Gods: the first, the right understanding of the nature of the soul, that it is the oldest and divinest of all the things to which motion, taking to itself the power of birth, gives perpetual being; and the other, the perception of order in the movements of matter, in the stars, and in all other things which an authoritatively ruling mind orders and makes fair. For of those who contemplate these things neither imperfectly nor idiotically, no one of men has been born so atheist as not to receive the absolutely contrary impression to that which the vulgar suppose. For to the vulgar it seems that people dealing with astronomy and the other arts that are concerned with necessary law, must become atheists, in seeing that things come of necessity, and not of the conception formed by a will desiring accomplishment of good. But that has been so only when they looked at them" (in the imperfect and idiotic way) "thinking that the soul was newer than matter, instead of older than matter, and after it, instead of before it,—thinking which, they turned all things upside-down, and themselves also: so that they could not see in the heavenly bodies anything but lifeless stones and dirt; and filled themselves with atheism and hardness of heart, against which the reproaches of the poets were true enough, likening the philosophers to dogs uttering vain yelpings. But indeed, as I have said, the contrary of all this is the fact. For of mortal men he only can be rightly wise and reverent to the Gods, who knows these two things—the Priority of the Spirit, and the Masterhood of Mind over the things in Heaven, and who knowing these things first, adding then to them those necessary parts of introductory learning of which we have often before spoken, and also those relating to

the Muse, shall harmonise them all into the system of the practices and laws of states." *

The word 'necessary' in the above sentence,

* The Greek sentence is so confused, and the real meaning of it so entirely dependent on the reader's knowledge of what has long preceded it, that I am obliged slightly to modify and complete it, to make it clear. Lest the reader should suspect any misrepresentation, here is Mr. Jowett's more literal rendering of it, which however, in carelessly omitting one word (ἀναγκαῖα), and writing "acquired the previous knowledge," instead of "acquired the previous *necessary* knowledge," has lost the clue to the bearing of the sentence on former teaching :—

"No man can be a true worshipper of the Gods who does not know these two principles—that the soul is the eldest of all things which are born, and is immortal, and rules over all bodies; moreover, as I have now said several times, he who has not contemplated the mind of nature which is said to exist in the stars, and acquired the previous knowledge, and seen the connection of them with music, and harmonized them all with laws and institutions, is not able to give a reason for such things as have a reason." Compare the Wisdom of Solomon, xiii. 1–9 :—"Surely vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things that are seen, know him that is: neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the workmaster; but deemed either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven, to be the gods which govern the world. With whose beauty if they being delighted took them to be gods, let them know how much better the Lord of them is: for the first author of beauty hath created them. But if they were astonished at their power and virtue, let them understand by them how much mightier he is that made them. For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the maker of them is seen. But yet for this they are the less to be blamed: for they peradventure err, seeking God, and desirous to find him. For being conversant in his works they search him diligently, and believe their sight; because the things are beautiful that are seen. Howbeit neither are they to be pardoned. For if they were able to know so much, that they could aim at the world, how did they not sooner find out the Lord thereof?"

refers to a most important passage in the seventh book, to understand which, I must now state, in summary, Plato's general plan of education.

It is founded primarily on the distinction between masters and servants; the education of servants and artizans being not considered in the Laws, but supposed to be determined by the nature of the work they have to do. The education he describes is only for the persons whom we call 'gentlemen'—that is to say, landholders, living in idleness on the labour of slaves. (The Greek word for slave and servant is the same; our word slave being merely a modern provincialism contracted from 'Sclavonian.' See 'St. Mark's Rest,' Supplement I.)

Our manufacturers, tradesmen, and artizans, would therefore be left out of question, and our domestic servants and agricultural labourers all summed by Plato simply under the word 'slaves'*—a word which the equivocation of vulgar historians and theologians always translates exactly as it suits their own views: 'slave,' when they want to depreciate Greek politics; and servant, when they are translating the words of Christ or St. Paul, lest either Christ or St. Paul should be recognized as speaking of the same persons as Plato.

Now, therefore, the reader is to observe that the teaching of St. George differs by *extension* from that of Plato, in so far as the Greek never imagined that the blessings of education could be extended to

* Laws, VII. 303, 17 (806).

servants as well as to masters: but it differs by absolute contradiction from that of Mr. Wilberforce and Mrs. Beecher Stowe, in *their* imagination that there should be no servants and no masters at all. Nor, except in a very modified degree, does even its extended charity differ from Plato's severity. For if you collect what I have said about education hitherto, you will find it always spoken of as a means of discrimination between what is worthless and worthy in men; that the rough and worthless may be set to the roughest and foulest work, and the finest to the finest; the rough and rude work being, you will in time perceive, the best of charities to the rough and rude people. There is probably, for instance, no collier's or pitman's work so rough or dirty, but that—if you set and kept —— to it, —his general character and intelligence would in course of time be improved to the utmost point of which they are capable.

A Greek gentleman's education then, which, in some modified degree, St. George proposes to make universal for Englishmen who really deserve to have it, consisted essentially in perfect discipline in music, poetry, and military exercises; but with these, if he were to be a perfect person, fit for public duties, he had also to learn three 'necessary' sciences: those of number, space, and motion, (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy,) which are called 'necessary,' not merely as being instrumental to complete human usefulness, but also as being knowledges of things existing by Divine Fate, which the Gods themselves cannot

alter, against which they cannot contend, and "without the knowledge of which no one can become a God, an angel, or an hero capable of taking true care of men." *

None of these sciences, however, were to be learned either with painful toil, or to any extent liable to make men lose sight of practical duty. "For," he says, "though partly I fear indeed the unwillingness to learn at all, much more do I fear the laying hold of any of these sciences in an evil way. For it is not a terrible thing, nor by any means the greatest of evils, nor even a great evil at all, to have no experience of any of these things. But to have much experience and much learning, with evil leading, is a far greater loss than that." This noble and evermore to be attended sentence is (at least in the fulness of it) untranslatable but by expansion. I give, therefore, Mr. Jowett's and the French translations, with my own, to show the various ways in which different readers take it; and then I shall be able to explain the full bearing of it.

(1) "For entire ignorance is not so terrible or extreme an evil, and is far from being the greatest of all; too much cleverness, and too much learning, accompanied with ill bringing up, are far more fatal."

* This most singular sentence, (VII. 818), having reference to the rank in immortality attainable by great human spirits, ("hac arte Pollux et vagus Hercules," etc.,) will be much subject of future inquiry. See, however, the note farther on.

The word which Plato uses for 'much experience' does literally mean *that*, and has nothing whatever to do with 'cleverness' in the ordinary sense; but it involves the idea of dexterity gained by practice, which was what Mr. Jowett thought of. "Ill bringing up" is again too narrow a rendering. The word I translate literally 'leading'* is technically used for a complete scheme of education; but in this place it means the tendency which is given to the thoughts and aim of the person, whatever the scheme of education may be. Thus we might put a boy through all the exercises required in this passage—(through music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy,) and yet throughout give him an evil 'leading,' making all these studies conducive to the gratification of ambition, or the acquirement of wealth. Plato means that we had better leave him in total ignorance than do this.

(French) "L'ignorance absolue n'est pas le plus grand des maux, ni le plus à redouter: une vaste étendue de connaissances mal digérées est quelque chose de bien pire."

The Frenchman avoids, you see, the snare of the technical meaning; but yet his phrase, 'ill digested,' gives no idea of Plato's real thought, which goes to the *cause* of indigestion, and is, that knowledge becomes evil if the aim be not virtuous: nor does he mean at all that the knowledge *itself* is imperfect

* It is virtually the *end* of the word ped-agogue—the person who *led* children to their school.

or 'ill digested,' but that the most accurate and consummate science, and the most splendid dexterity in art, and experience in politics, are worse evils, and that by far, than total ignorance, if the aim and tone of the spirit are false.

"Therefore,"—he now goes on, returning to his practical point, which was that no toilsome work should be spent on the sciences, such as to enslave the soul in them, or make them become an end of life—"Therefore, children who are to be educated as gentlemen should only learn, of each science, so much as the Egyptian children learn with their reading and writing, for from their early infancy their masters introduce the practice of arithmetic, giving them fruits and garlands of flowers," (cowslip-balls and daisy-chains), "to fit together, fewer or more out of equal numbers; and little vessels of gold, silver, and bronze, sometimes to be mingled with each other, sometimes kept separate;" (with estimate of relative value probably in the game, leading to easy command of the notion of pounds, shillings, and pence,) "and so making every operation of arithmetic of practical use to them, they lead them on into understanding of the numbering and arranging of camps, and leadings* of regiments, and at last of household economy, making them in all more serviceable and shrewd than others." Such, with geometry and astronomy, (into the detail

* The same word again—the end of pedagogue, applied to soldiers instead of children.

of which I cannot enter to-day,) being Plato's 'necessary' science, the higher conditions of education, which alone, in his mind, deserve the name, are those above named as relating to the Muse.

To which the vital introduction is a passage most curiously contrary to Longfellow's much-sung line, "Life is real, life is earnest,"—Plato declaring out of the very deep of his heart, that it is *un*real and *un*earnest. I cannot give space to translate the whole of the passage, though I shall return for a piece presently; but the gist of it is that the Gods alone are great, and have great things to do; but man is a poor little puppet, made to be their plaything; and the virtue of him is to play merrily in the little raree-show of his life, so as to please the Gods. Analyzed, the passage contains three phases of most solemn thought; the first, an amplification of the "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" the second, of the "He walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain;" the third, that his real duty is to quiet himself, and live in happy peace and play, all his measure of days. "The lambs play always, they know no better;" and they ought to know no better, he thinks, if they are truly lambs of God: the practical outcome of all being that religious service is to be entirely with rejoicing,—that only brightness of heart can please the Gods; and that asceticism and self-discipline are to be practised only that we may be made capable of such sacred joy.

The extreme importance of this teaching is in its

opposition to the general Greek instinct, that 'Tragedy,' or song in honour of the Gods, should be sad. An instinct which, in spite of Plato, has lasted to this day, in the degree in which men disbelieve in the Gods themselves, and in their love. Accepting cheerfulness, therefore, as the fulfilment of sanctity, we shall understand in their order the practical pieces both about music* and about higher education, of which take this first (VI. 766).

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* I thought to have collected into this place the passages about the demoralizing effect of sad music, (Verdi's, for instance, the most corrupting type hitherto known,) from the Republic as well as the Laws: but that must be for next month; meantime, here is a little bit about tragedy which *must* be read now, though I'm terribly sorry to give it only in small print. It must not have small print, so I separate it only by a line from the text.

"Concerning comedy, then, enough said; but for the earnest poets of the world occupied in tragedy, if perchance any of these should come to us, and ask thus: 'Oh, ye strangers, will you have us to go into your city and your land, or no?[1] and shall we bring our poetry to you and act it to you, or how is it determined by you of the doing[2] such things?' What then should

[1] In sentences like this the familiar euphony of 'no' for 'not,' is softer and fuller in meaning, as in sound, than the (commonly held) grammatical form;—and in true analysis, the grammar is better, because briefer, in the familiar form; it being just as accurate to complete the sentence by understanding 'say' before 'no,' as by repeating 'have us' after 'not.'

[2] In every case, throughout this sentence, (and generally in translations from good Greek philosophical writing,) the reader must remember that 'drama' being our adopted Greek word for 'the thing done,' and 'poetry' our adopted Greek word for 'the thing made,' properly the meaning of the sentence would require us to read 'maker' for 'poet,' and 'doer' for 'actor.'

"For every sprout of things born, once *started* fairly towards the virtue of its nature, fulfils it in prosperous end; this being true of all plants, and of animals wild or gentle, and of man; and man, as we have said, is indeed gentle, if only he receive right education, together with fortunate nature; and so becomes the divinest and the gentlest of things alive; but if not enough or not rightly trained, he becomes, of all things that earth brings forth, the savagest."

The "together with fortunate nature" in this passage, refers to the necessity of fine race in men themselves; and limits the future question of education to such, Plato not concerning himself about such as are ill-born. Compare the Vulgate of the birth of Moses, "videns eum elegantem."

The essential part of the education of these,

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we answer, answering rightly, to the divine men? For in my thoughts it is fixed that we should answer thus: 'Oh, noblest of strangers,' should we say, 'we ourselves also according to our power are poets of tragedy,—the most beautiful that we can and the best. For all our polity is but one great presentment of the best and most beautiful life, which we say to be indeed the best and truest tragedy: poets therefore are you, and we also alike poets of the same things, antartists, and antagonists to you as our hope is of that most beautiful drama, which the true law only can play to its end. Do not therefore think that we at all thus easily shall allow you to pitch your tents in our market-place; and yield to you that bringing in your clear-voiced actors, speaking greater things than we, you should speak to our people,—to our wives and to our children and to all our multitude, saying, concerning the same things that we speak of, not the same words, but for the most part, contrary words.'"

then,—that properly belonging to the Muse,—is all to be given by the time they are sixteen; the ten years of childhood being exclusively devoted to forming the disposition; then come three years of grammar, with the collateral sciences, in the manner above explained, and then three years of practice in executive music: bodily exercises being carried on the whole time to the utmost degree possible at each age. After sixteen, the youth enters into public life, continuing the pursuit of virtue as the object of all, life being not long enough for it.

The three years of literary education, from ten to thirteen, are supposed enough to give a boy of good talent and disposition all the means of cultivating his mind that are needful. The term must not be exceeded. If the boy has not learned by that time to read and write accurately and elegantly,* he is not to be troubled with such things more, but left illiterate. Then, literary study is to be foregone for three years even by those who are afterwards

* Every day, I perceive more and more the importance of accurate verbal training. If the Duke of Argyll, for instance, had but had once well taught him at school the relations of the words lex, lego, loi, and loyal; and of rex, rego, roi, and royal, (see 'Unto this Last,' p. 73,) he could neither have committed himself to the false title of his treatise on natural history, 'reign of law,' nor to the hollow foundation of his treatise on the tenure of land in the assumption that the long establishment of a human law, whether criminal or not, must make it divinely indisputable. See p. 6 of "A Crack with His Grace the Duke of Argyll." Seton and Mackenzie, Edinburgh; Whittaker, London.

to take it up again, that they may learn music completely — this being considered a sedentary study, and superseding grammar, while the athletic exercises always occupy the same time of each day, and are never remitted.

Understanding this general scheme, we begin at the beginning; and the following passage, II. 501. 1 (653), defines for us Plato's thoughts, and explains to us his expressions relating to the discipline of childhood.

"Now, I mean by education * that first virtue which can be attained by children, when pleasure and liking, and pain and disliking, are properly implanted in their souls while yet they cannot understand why; but so that when they get the power of reasoning, its perfect symphony may assure them that they have been rightly moralled into their existing morals. This perfect symphony of the complete soul is properly called virtue; but the part of its tempering which, with respect to pleasure and pain, has been so brought up, from first to last, as to hate what it should hate, and love what it should love, we shall be right in calling its education.

"Now these well-nourished habits of being rightly pained and pleased are, for the most part, loosened and lost by men in the rough course of life; and the Gods, pitying the race born to labour, gave them, for reward of their toil and rest from it, the times of

* Jowett thus translates; but the word here in Plato means, properly, the result of education, spoken of as the habit fixed in the child; 'good breeding' would be the nearest English, but involves the idea of race, which is not here touched by the Greek.

festival to the Gods. And the Gods gave, for companions to them in their festivals, the Muses, and Apollo, the leader of Muses, and Dionysus, that the pure instincts they first had learned might be restored to them while they kept festival with these Gods.

"Now, therefore, we must think whether what is hymned * among us be truly said, and according to nature or not.

"And this is what is said: that every young thing that lives is alike in not being able to keep quiet, but must in some way move and utter itself,—for mere movement's sake, leaping and skipping, as if dancing and at play for pleasure,—and for noise' sake, uttering every sort of sound. And that, indeed, other living creatures have no sense of the laws of order and disorder in movements which we call rhythm and harmony; but to us, those Gods whom we named as fellows with us in our choirs,† these are they who gave us the delightful sense of rhythm and harmony in which we move; and they lead our choirs, binding us together in songs and dances, naming them choruses from the choral joy.

"Shall we, then, receive for truth thus much of their tradition, that the first education must be by the Muses and Apollo?

"*K.* So let it be accepted.‡

"*A.* Then the uneducated person will be one who has received no choral discipline; and the educated,

* A hymn is properly a song embodying sacred tradition; hence, familiarly the thing commonly said of the Gods.

† Compare II. 539. 5 (665).

‡ Henceforward, I omit what seem to me needless of the mere expressions of varied assent which break the clauses of the Athenian's course of thought.

one who has been formed to a sufficient degree under the choral laws.

"Also the choir, considered in its wholeness, consists of dance and song; therefore a well-educated person must be one who can sing and dance well.

"*K.* It would seem so."

And here, that we may not confuse ourselves, or weaken ourselves, with any considerations of the recent disputes whether we have souls or not, —be it simply understood that Plato always means by the soul the aggregate of mental powers obtained by scientific culture of the imagination and the passions; and by the body the aggregate of material powers obtained by scientific promotion of exercise and digestion. It is possible for the soul to be strong with a weak body, and the body strong with a weak soul; and in this sense only the two are separately considered, but not necessarily, therefore, considered as finally separable.

And understanding thus much, we can now clearly understand, whether we receive it or not, Plato's distinct assertion that, as gymnastic exercise is necessary to keep the body healthy, musical exercise is necessary to keep the soul healthy; and that the proper nourishment of the intellect and passions can no more take place without music, than the proper functions of the stomach and the blood without exercise.

We may be little disposed, at first, to believe this, because we are unaware, in the first place, how much music, from the nurse's song to the military

band and the lover's ballad, does really modify existing civilized life; and, in the second place, we are not aware how much higher range, if rightly practical, its influence would reach; of which right practice I must say, before going on with Plato's teaching, that the chief condition is companionship, or choral association, (not so much marked by Plato in words, because he could not conceive of music practised otherwise,) and that for persons incapable of song to be content in amusement by a professional singer, is as much a sign of decay in the virtue and use of music, as crowded spectators in the amphitheatre sitting to be amused by gladiators are a sign of decline in the virtue and use of war.

And now, we take the grand statement of the evil of *change* in methods of childish play, following on the general discussion of the evil of change:—

"I say, then, that in all cities we have all failed to recognize that the kind of play customary with the children is the principal of the forces that maintain the established laws. For when the kind of play is determined, and so regulated that the children always play and use their fancies in the same way and with the same playthings, this quietness allows the laws which are established in earnest to remain quiet also; but if once the plays are moved and cast in new shapes, always introducing other changes, and none of the young people agreeing with each other in their likings, nor as to what is becoming and unbecoming either in the composure of their bodies or in their dress, but praise in a special way any one who brings in a new fashion whether of composure or colour—nothing, if

we say rightly, can be a greater plague (destructive disease) in a city; for he who changes the habits of youth is, indeed, without being noticed, making what is ancient contemptible, and what is new, honourable,—and than this, I repeat, whether in the belief of it, or the teaching, there cannot be a greater plague inflicted on a city.

"Can we do anything better to prevent this than the Egyptians did; namely, to consecrate every dance and every melody, ordering first the festivals of the year, and determining what days are to be devoted to the Gods, and to the children of the Gods, and to the Angels.* And then to determine also what song at

* I cannot but point out with surprise and regret the very mischievous error of Mr. Jowett's translation in this place of the word '*δαίμονες*'—'heroes.' Had Plato meant heroes, he would have said heroes, the word in this case being the same in English as in Greek. He means the Spiritual Powers which have lower office of ministration to men; in this sense the word dæmon was perfectly and constantly understood by the Greeks, and by the Christian Church adopting Greek terms; and on the theory that the Pagan religion was entirely false, but that its spiritual powers had real existence, the word dæmon necessarily came among Christians to mean an evil angel,—just as much an angel as Raphael or Gabriel—but of contrary powers. I cannot therefore use the literal word dæmon, because it has this wholly false and misleading association infixed in it; but in translating it 'angel,' I give to the English reader its full power and meaning in the Greek mind; being exactly what the term ἄγγελος, or messenger, was adopted by the Christians to signify, of their own *good* spirits. There are then, the reader must observe generally, four orders of *higher* spiritual powers, honoured by the Greeks:

I. The Gods,—of various ranks, from the highest Twelve to the minor elemental powers, such as Tritons, or Harpies.

II. The Sons of the Gods,—children of the Gods by mortal mothers, as Heracles, or Castor. Rightly sometimes called Demi-Gods.

each offering is to be sung; and with what dances each sacrifice to be sanctified; and whatever rites and times are thus ordained, all the citizens in common, sacrificing to the Fates and to all the Gods, shall consecrate with libation.

"I say, then, there should be three choirs to fill, as with enchantment of singing, the souls of children while they are tender, teaching them many other things, of which we have told and shall tell, but this chiefly and for the head and sum of all, that the life which is noblest is also deemed by the Gods the happiest. Saying this to them, we shall at once say the truest of things, and that of which we shall most easily persuade those whom we ought to persuade." With which we may at once read also this,—II. 540. 2 (665): "That every grown-up person and every child, slave and free, male and female,—and, in a word, the entire city singing to itself—should never pause in repeating such good lessons as we have explained; yet somehow changing, and so inlaying and varying them, that the singers may always be longing to sing, and delighting in it."

III. Angels,—spiritual powers in constant attendance on man.

IV. Heroes,—men of consummate virtue, to whose souls religious rites are performed in thankfulness by the people whom they saved or exalted, and whose immortal power remains for their protection. I have often elsewhere spoken of the beautiful custom of the Locrians always to leave a vacant place in their charging ranks for the spirit of Ajax Oileus. Of these four orders, however, the first two naturally blend, because the sons of the Gods became Gods after death. Hence the real orders of spiritual powers *above* humanity, are three—Gods, Angels, Heroes, (as we shall find presently, in the passage concerning prayer and praise,) associated with the spirits on the ordinary level of humanity, of Home, and of Ancestors. Compare Fors, Letter LXX., vol. iii. of this edition, p. 419.

And this is to be ordered according to the ages of the people and the ranks of the deities. For the choir of the Muses, is to be of children, up to the age of sixteen; after that, the choir of Apollo, formed of those who have learned perfectly the mastery of the lyre,—from sixteen to thirty; and then the choir of Dionysus, of the older men, from thirty to sixty; and after sixty, being no longer able to sing, they should become mythologists, relating in divine tradition the moral truths they formerly had sung. II. 528. 12 (664).

At this point, if not long before, I imagine my reader stopping hopelessly, feeling the supreme uselessness of such a conception as this, in modern times, and its utter contrariness to everything taught as practical among us. 'Belief in Gods! belief in divine tradition of Myths! Old men, as a class, to become mythologists, instead of misers! and music, throughout life, to be the safeguard of morality!—What futility is it to talk of such things *now*.'

Yes, to a certain extent this impression is true. Plato's scheme was impossible even in his own day, —as Bacon's New Atlantis in *his* day—as Calvin's reform in *his* day—as Goethe's Academe in his. Out of the good there was in all these men, the world gathered what it could find of evil, made its useless Platonism out of Plato, its graceless Calvinism out of Calvin, determined Bacon to be the meanest of mankind, and of Goethe gathered only a luscious story of seduction, and daintily singable devilry.

Nothing in the dealings of Heaven with Earth is so wonderful to me as the way in which the evil angels are allowed to spot, pervert, and bring to nothing, or to worse, the powers of the greatest men: so that Greece must be ruined, for all that Plato can say,—Geneva for all that Calvin can say,—England for all that Sir Thomas More and Bacon can say;—and only Gounod's Faust to be the visible outcome to Europe of the school of Weimar.

What, underneath all that visible ruin, these men have done in ministry to the continuous soul of this race, may yet be known in the day when the wheat shall be gathered into the garner. But I can't go on with my work now; besides, I had a visit yesterday from the friend who wrote me that letter about speaking more gently of things and people, and he brought me a sermon of the Bishop of Manchester's to read,—which begins with the sweetly mild and prudent statement that St. Paul, while "wading in the perilous depths" of anticipations of immortality, and *satisfied* that there would be a victory over the grave, and that mortality would be swallowed up of life, *wisely* brought his reader's thoughts back from *dreamland* to reality, by bidding them simply be steadfast, unmovable—always abounding in the work of the Lord,—forasmuch as they knew that their labour would not be in vain in the Lord; and in which, farther on, the Bishop, feeling the knowledge in modern times not quite so positive on that subject, supports his own delicately suggested opinions by quoting Mr. John

Stuart Mill, who "in his posthumous essays admits that though the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is probably an illusion, it is morally so valuable that it had better be retained,"—a sentence, by the way, which I recommend to the study of those friends of mine who were so angry with me for taxing Mr. John Stuart Mill with dishonesty, on the subject of rent. ('Time and Tide,' postscript to Letter XXIII.)

Well, all this, the sermon, and the quotations in it, and the course of thought they have led me into, are entirely paralysing to me in the horrible sense they give me of loathsome fallacy and fatuity pervading every syllable of our modern words, and every moment of our modern life; and of the uselessness of asking such people to read any Plato, or Bacon, or Sir Thomas More, or to do anything of the true work of the Lord, forasmuch as they *don't* know, and seem to have no capacity for learning, that such labour shall not be in vain. But I will venture once more to warn the Bishop against wading, himself, in the "perilous depths" of anticipations of immortality, until he has answered my simple question to him, whether he considers usury a work of the Lord?

I cannot go on with my work, therefore, in this temper, and indeed perhaps this much of Plato is enough for one letter;—but I must say, at least, what it is all coming to.

If you will look back to § 61 of 'Time and Tide,' you will find the work I am now upon, completely

sketched out in it, saying finally that "the action of the devilish or deceiving person is in nothing shown quite so distinctly among us at this day, not even in our commercial dishonesties, or social cruelties, as in its having been able to take away music as an instrument of education altogether, and to enlist it almost wholly in the service of superstition on the one hand, and of sensuality on the other." And then follows the promise that, after explaining, as far as I know it, the significance of the parable of the Prodigal Son, (done in 'Time and Tide,' §§ 175–178,) I should "take the three means of human joy therein stated, fine dress, rich food, and music, and show you how these are meant all alike to be sources of life and means of moral discipline, to all men, and how they have all three been made by the devil the means of guilt, dissoluteness, and death."

This promise I have never fulfilled, and after seven years am only just coming to the point of it. Which is, in few words, that to distribute good food, beautiful dress, and the practical habit of delicate art, is the proper work of the fathers and mothers of every people for help of those who have been lost in guilt and misery: and that only by *direct* doing of these three things can they now act beneficently or helpfully to any soul capable of reformation. Therefore, you who are eating luxurious dinners, call in the tramp from the highway and share them with him,—so gradually you will understand how your brother came to *be* a tramp; and practically make your own dinners plain till the poor man's dinner is rich,—or

you are no Christians; and you who are dressing in fine dress, put on blouses and aprons, till you have got your poor dressed with grace and decency, —or you are no Christians; and you who can sing and play on instruments, hang your harps on the pollards above the rivers you have poisoned, or else go down among the mad and vile and deaf things whom you have made, and put melody into the souls of them,—else you are no Christians.

No Christians, you; no, nor have you even the making of a Christian in you. Alms and prayers, indeed, alone, won't make one, but they have the bones and substance of one in the womb; and you —poor modern Judasian—have lost not only the will to give, or to pray, but the very understanding of what gift and prayer mean. "Give, and it shall be given to you,"—not by God, forsooth, you think, in glorious answer of gift, but only by the Jew money-monger in twenty per cent., and let no benevolence be done that will not pay. "Knock, and it shall be opened to you,"—nay, never by God, in miraculous answer, but perchance you may be allowed to amuse yourself, with the street boys, in rat-tat-tatting on the knocker; or perchance you may be taken for a gentleman, if you elegantly ring the visitors' bell—till the policeman Death comes down the street, and stops the noise of you.

Wretch that you are, if indeed, calling yourself a Christian, you *can* find any dim fear of God, or any languid love of Christ, mixed in the dregs of you,—then, for God's sake, learn at least what prayer

means, from Hezekiah and Isaiah, and not from the last cockney curly-tailed puppy who yaps and snaps in the *Nineteenth Century*,*—and for Christ's sake, learn what alms mean, from the Lord who gave you His Life, and not from the lady patronesses of the last charity ball.

Learn what these mean, Judasian Dives, if it may be,—while Lazarus yet lies among the dogs,—while yet there is no gulf fixed between you and the heavens,—while yet the stars in their courses do not *forbid* you to think their Guide is mindful of you. For truly the day is coming of which Isaiah told—"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" And the day of which he told is coming, also, when the granaries of the plains of heaven, and the meres of its everlasting hills, shall be opened, and poured forth for its children; and the bread shall be given, and the water shall be sure, for him "that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly—that despiseth the gain of oppressions—that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes—that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil. He shall dwell on high—his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks." Yea, blessing,

* Nevertheless, I perceive at last a change coming over the spirit of our practical literature, and commend all the recent papers by Lord Blackford, Mr. Oxenham, Mr. Mallock, and Mr. Hewlett, very earnestly to my own reader's attention.

beyond all blessing in the love of mortal friend, or the light of native land,—"Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty; they shall behold the Land that is far away."

I give a general answer to the following letter, asking my correspondent's pardon for anything which may seem severe, or inapplicable, in his own special case. There are also, I fear, one or two words misprinted or misplaced in the letter—but I have carelessly lost the MS., and cannot correct.

"Dear Sir,—I venture to address you upon a matter that concerns me very much—viz., the leisure time of my existence. Nine hours of each day are taken up as employer (sedentary business); three hours of which, perhaps, working myself. One hour and a half, each, devoted to the study of music and drawing or painting. Five hours yet remaining walking to or from business, meals, physical exercise,—this last of the usual gymnastic useless pattern.

"I cannot but think that there must be many others like situated perhaps *compelled* to plunge with the stream of the questionable morality of modern commerce, or in other various ways making it utterly impossible, during that portion of the day, to follow out the life you teach us to live,—yet who feel and desire that that portion of day they can really call their own, should be spent in a true rounded manly development, and as far as may be in harmony with that which is eternally right. I do not know of any prescribed detail you have made with special reference to this compromised class, and this is the only excuse I can offer for writing to you—you that are the source of all that I feel deepest in

religion and morality: fathom it I cannot, yet feel deeper and stronger each succeeding year, all that I love in nature and art I owe to you; and this debt of gratitude has made me bold to try and make it greater.

"Ever gratefully yours."

If we know there is a God, and mean to please Him, or if even (which is the utmost we can generally say, for the best of our faith), if we think there is so much hope, or danger of there being a God as to make it prudent in us to try to discover whether there be or not, in the only way He has allowed us to ascertain the fact, namely, doing as we have heard that He has bidden us, we may be sure He can never be pleased by the form of compromise with circumstances, that all the business of our day shall be wrong, on the principle of sacrificial atonement, that the play of it shall be right;—or perhaps not even that *quite* right, but in my correspondent's cautious phrase, only "as far as may be, in harmony with what is right."

Now the business 'necessities' of the present day are the precise form of idolatry which is, at the present day, *crucially* forbidden by Christ; precisely as falling down to worship graven images, or eating meat offered to idols, was *crucially* forbidden in earlier times. And it is by enduring the persecution, or death, which may be implied in abandoning 'business necessities' that the Faith of the Believer, whether in the God of the Jew or Christian, must be *now* tried and proved.

But in order to make such endurance possible, of course our side must be openly taken, and our companions in the cause known; this being also needful, that our act may have the essential virtue of Witness-dom, or as we idly translate it, Martyr-dom.

This is the practical reason for joining a guild, and signing at least the Creed of St. George, which is so worded as to be acceptable by all who are resolved to serve God, and withdraw from idolatry.*

But for the immediate question in my correspondent's case—

First. Keep a working man's dress at the office, and always walk home and return in it; so as to be able to put your hand to anything that is useful. Instead of the fashionable vanities of competitive gymnastics, learn common forge work, and to plane and saw well:—then, if you find in the city you live in, that everything which human hands and arms are able, and human mind willing, to do, of pulling, pushing, carrying, making, or cleaning—(see in last Fors the vulgar schoolmistress's notion of the civilization implied in a mechanical broom)—is done by machinery,—you will come clearly to understand, what I have never been able yet to beat, with any quantity of *verbal* hammering, into my readers' heads,—that, as long as living breath-engines, and their glorious souls and muscles, stand idle in the streets, to dig coal out of pits to drive dead steam-engines, is an absurdity, waste, and wickedness, for which—I am bankrupt in terms of contempt,—and politely finish my paragraph—"My brethren, these things ought not so to be."

Secondly. Of simple exercises, learn to walk and run at the utmost speed consistent with health: do this by always going at the quickest pace you can in the streets,

* The magnificent cheat which the Devil played on the Protestant sect, from Knox downwards, in making them imagine that Papists were disbelieving idolaters, and thus entirely effacing all spiritual meaning from the word 'idolatry,' was the consummation of his great victory over the Christian Church, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

and by steadily, though minutely, increasing your pace over a trial piece of ground, every day. Learn also dancing, with extreme precision; and wrestling, if you have any likely strength; in summer, also rowing in sea-boats; or barge-work, on calm water; and, in winter, (with skating of course,) quarterstaff and sword-exercise.

A letter of deep import from my old friend and correspondent in 'Time and Tide,' Mr. Dixon. It shall be commented on at length in next Fors: meantime, I commend with sternest ratification, to all my readers, Mr. George Mitchell's letter in the *Builder* for August 25th of this year.

"15, Sunderland Street,
Sunderland, 15*th Sept.*, 1877.

"Dear Sir,—I omitted in my last to inform you that the new Labour League of America is a revival of the old ideas that were promulgated by the Anabaptists in the time of Luther, in Germany, in the Peasants' War, and then again by the French Revolutionists, 1789. The leader Schwab is one of the leaders of the 'Internationalists' who figured in the Paris Commune days. A very good summary of their ideas and plans was given in a series of articles in *Fraser's Magazine* a few years ago. I possess several of their programmes, though of late I have heard very little of them. I enclose a cutting respecting their Congress this year on the Continent.

"I will try to procure something of more detail, for I am very deeply interested in this organization, though I do not agree with all the principles they advocate. I see in it a great principle for the good of the working classes if it was rightly and justly conducted. It aims to unite the working classes of every country in one bond of universal brotherhood. It is opposed to war, strikes, and

all such like combinations having *force* as the principal means of attaining the amelioration of the evils they suffer from. The original ideas were of a simple, gradual, progressive character, but ultimated in the fierce rabid actions that stained the Commune in Paris, the result of being led by fierce wild men. In a novel entitled 'The Universalist,' is a very good account of their aims, only it is coloured with a novelist's romantic way of depicting such matters.

"If you care for more respecting them, I can, I think, send you some particulars. I enclose you Bright's speech at Manchester, which seems not so jubilant as he used to be of the progress of our people: his allusion to Venice seemed akin to some thoughts of yours, so thought would interest you: also his allusion to the Indian Famine, and our neglect of our duty to these people.

"Was the leisure of the Greeks not due to the hard work of the helots and slaves they had? Is *our* leisure, or rather the leisure of our rich people, not due to the work done by our workpeople? Just think of the leisure of our people,—think of the idle lives of the daughters of our tradespeople: it seems to me there is more leisure enjoyed now by our people than ever was enjoyed by any people—I mean the rich and trading classes.

"When I visit the houses of our trading classes, I feel amazed to see the gradual change in their circumstances within these few years,—the style of life they live, the servants they keep, the almost idle lives of their sons and daughters. Then see the way in which we live, how different to the simple style of our forefathers! If our lives were simpler, if we all had to labour somewhat like our old people, then how different it would be!

Yours respectfully,

"Thomas Dixon."

Well said, my old friend: but you must not confuse fevered idleness with leisure.

All questions raised by my correspondents respecting our want or possession of leisure, are answered by the following short extract from Plato:—

"*The Athenian.* Do we then all recognize the reason why, in our cities, such noble choirs and exercise have all but passed away;—or shall we only say that it is because of the ignorance of the people, and their legislators?

"*The Cretan.* Perhaps so.

"*A.* Ah no, you too simple Cleinias! there are two other causes; and causes enough they are, too.

"*C.* Which mean you?

"*A.* The first, the love of riches, leaving no moment of leisure" (making all Time leisureless) "to care about anything but one's own possessions, upon which the soul of every citizen being suspended, cannot contain any other thought but of his daily gain. And whatever knowledge or skill may conduce to such gain,—*that*, he is most ready in private to learn and practise; but mocks at every other. Here then is one of the causes we look for, that no one cares any more to be earnest in any good or honourable thing; but every man, in insatiable thirst for gold and silver, will submit himself to any art or trick if only he can grow rich by it, and do any deed,—be it holy, be it profane, or be it utterly vile,—reluctant at nothing, if only he may get the power, like a beast, to eat and drink his fill of every kind, and fulfil to the uttermost all his lusts."—*Laws*, VIII. 351. 20 (831).

LETTER LXXXIII

HESIOD'S MEASURE

"WAS the leisure of the Greeks not owing to the hard work of the helots and slaves they had?" asked my old friend, Thomas Dixon, in his letter given last month.

Yes, truly, good labourer; nor the Greeks' leisure only, but also—if we are to call it leisure—that of the rich and powerful of this world, since this world began. And more and more I perceive, as my old age opens to me the deeper secrets of human life, that the true story and strength of that world are the story and strength of these helots and slaves; and only its fiction and feebleness in the idleness of those who feed on them:—which fiction and feebleness, with all their cruelty and sensuality, filling the cup of the fornication of the kings of the earth now to the lip, must be, in no long time now, poured out upon the earth; and the cause of the poor judged by the King who shall reign in righteousness. For all these petty struggles of the past, of which you write to me, are but the scudding clouds and first wailing winds, of the storm which must be as the sheet lightning—from one part of

heaven to the other,—"So also shall the coming of the Son of Man be."

Only the first scudding clouds, I say,—these hitherto seditions; for, as yet, they have only been of the ambitious, or the ignorant; and only against tyrannous men: so that they ended, if successful, in mere ruinous license; and if they failed, were trampled out in blood: but *now*, the ranks are gathering, on the one side, of men rightly informed, and meaning to seek redress by lawful and honourable means only; and, on the other, of men capable of compassion, and open to reason, but with personal interests at stake so vast, and with all the gear and mechanism of their acts so involved in the web of past iniquity, that the best of them are helpless, and the wisest blind.

No debate, on such terms, and on such scale, has yet divided the nations; nor can any wisdom foresee the sorrow, or the glory, of its decision. One thing only we know, that in this contest, assuredly, the victory cannot be by violence; that every conquest under the Prince of War retards the standards of the Prince of Peace; and that every good servant must abide his Master's coming in the patience, not the refusal, of his daily labour.

Patiently, and humbly, I resume my own, not knowing whether shall prosper—either this or that; caring only that, in so far as it reaches and remains, it may be faithful and true.

Following the best order I can in my notes,—interrupted by the Bishop's sermon in last letter,—

I take, next, Plato's description of the duties of the third choir, namely that of men between the ages of thirty and sixty; VII. 316, 9. (812).

"We said, then, that the sixty-years-old singers in the service of Dionysus should be, beyond other men, gifted with fine sense of rhythm, and of the meetings together of harmonies; so that being able to choose, out of imitative melody, what is well and ill represented of the soul in its passion, and well discerning the picture of the evil spirit from the picture of the good, they may cast away that which has in it the likeness of evil, and bring forward into the midst that which has the likeness of good; and hymn and sing *that* into the souls of the young, calling them forth to pursue the possession of virtue, by means of such likenesses. And for this reason the sounds of the lyre ought to be used for the sake of clearness in the chords;* the master and pupil keeping both their voices in one note together with the chord: but the changes of the voice and variety of the lyre, the chords giving one tune, and the poet another melody, and the oppositions of many notes to few, and of slow to swift, sometimes in symphony, sometimes in antiphony, the rhythm of the song also in every sort of complication inlaying itself among the sounds of the lyre,—with all this, the pupils who have to learn what is useful of music in only three years, must have nothing to do: for things opposed,

* 'Chord,' in the Greek use, means only one of the strings of the instrument, not a concord of notes. The lyre is used instead of the flute, that the music may be subordinate always to the words.

confusing each other, are difficult to learn: and youth, as far as possible, should be set at ease in learning."*

I think this passage alone may show the reader that the Greeks knew more of music than modern orchestral fiddlers fancy. For the essential work of Stradiuarius, in substituting the violin for the lyre and harp, was twofold. Thenceforward, (A) instrumental music became the captain instead of the servant of the voice; and (B) skill of instrumental music, as so developed, became impossible in the ordinary education of a gentleman. So that, since his time, old King Cole has called for his fiddlers three, and Squire Western sent Sophia to the harpsichord when he was drunk: but of souls won by Orpheus, or cities built by Amphion, we hear no more.

Now the reader must carefully learn the meanings of the—no fewer than seven—distinct musical terms used by Plato in the passages just given. The word I have translated 'changes of the voice' is, in the Greek technical,—'heterophony'; and we have besides, rhythm, harmony, tune, melody, symphony, and antiphony.

Of these terms 'rhythm' means essentially the time and metre; 'harmony' the fixed relation of any high note to any low one;† 'tune' the air

* Not by having smooth or level roads made for it, but by being plainly shown, and steadily cheered in, the rough and steep.

† The apparently vague use of the word 'harmony' by the Greeks is founded on their perception that there is just as fixed a

given by the instrument; 'melody' the air given by the voice; 'symphony' the concord of the voice with the instrument, or with companion voices; 'diaphony' their discord; 'antiphony' their opposition; and 'heterophony' their change.

And it will do more for us than merely fasten the sense of the terms, if we now re-read in last Fors the passage (page 216) respecting the symphony of acquired reason with rightly compelled affection; and then those following pieces respecting their diaphony, from an earlier parts of the Laws, III. 39, 8. (688), where the concordant verdict of thought and heart is first spoken of as the ruling virtue of the four cardinal; namely, "Prudence, with true conception and true opinion, and the loves and desires that follow on these. For indeed, the Word * returns to the same point, and what I said before, (if you will have it so, half in play,) now I say again in true earnest, that prayer itself

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relation of influence on each other between high and low notes following in a well-composed melody as when they are sounded together in a single chord. That is to say, the notes in their assigned sequence relatively increase the pleasure with which each is heard, and in that manner act 'harmoniously,' though not heard at the same instant. But the definition of the mingled chord is perfect in II. 539, 3. (665). "And to the order" (time) "of motion the name 'rhythm' is given, and to the mingling of high and low in sound, the name of 'harmony,' and the unison of both these we call 'choreia.'"

* I write, 'Word' (Logos) with the capital initial when it stands in the original for the 'entire course of reasoning,' since to substitute this long phrase would weaken the sentences fatally. But no mystic or divine sense is attached to the term 'Logos' in these places.

is deadly on the lips of a fool, unless he would pray that God would give him the contrary of his desires. And truly you will discern, if you follow out the Word in its fulness, that the ruin of the Doric cities never came on them because of cowardice, nor because their kings knew not how to make war; but because they knew not nobler human things, and were indeed ignorant with the greatest and fatallest of ignorances. And the greatest of ignorances, if you will have me tell it you, is this: when a man, judging truly of what is honourable and good, yet loves it not, but hates it, and loves and caresses with his soul what he perceives to be base and unjust,—this diaphony of his pain and pleasure with the rational verdict of his intellect, I call the last of ignorances; and the greatest, because it is in the multitude of the soul's thoughts.*"

Presently afterwards—though I do not, because of the introduction of other subjects in the sentence, go on translating—this same ignorance is called the 'out-of-tune-est' of all; there being scarcely a word in Greek social philosophy which has not reference to musical law; and scarcely a word in Greek musical science which has not understood reference to social law.

So that in final definition—II. 562, 17. (673)—"The whole Choreia is whole child-education for us, consisting, as we have seen, in the rhythms

* Note David, of the contrary state—

"In the *multitude* of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts *delight* my soul."

and harmonies which belong to sound, (for as there is a rhythm in the movement of the body, so there is a rhythm in the movement of sound, and the movement of sound we call tune). And *the movement of sound, so as to reach the soul for the education of it in virtue*, (we know not how,) we call MUSIC."

You see from this most important passage that the Greeks only called 'Music' the kind of sound which induced right moral feeling, ("they knew not *how*," but they knew it *did*), and any other kind of sound than that, however beautiful to the ear or scientific in composition, they did not call 'Music' (exercise under the Muses), but 'Amusia,' —the denial, or desolation for want, of the Muses. Word now become of wide use in modern society; most accurately, as the Fates have ordained, yet by an equivocation in language; for the old French verb 'muser,' 'to think in a dreamy manner,' came from the Latin 'musso,' 'to speak low,' or whisper, and not from the Greek word 'muse.' But it once having taken the meaning of meditation, 'a-muser,' 'to dispel musing,' became a verb very dear to generations of men whom any manner of thoughtfulness tormented; and,—such their way of life—could not but torment: whence the modern 'amusement' has practically established itself as equivalent to the Greek 'amusia.'

The Greek himself, however, did not express his idea fully in language, but only in myth. His 'amusia' does not mean properly the opposing

delightfulness, but only the interruption, and violation, of musical art. The proper word for the opposed delightful art would have been 'sirenic'; but he was content in the visionary symbol, and did not need the word, for the disciples of the Sirens of course asserted their songs to be Music as much as the disciples of the Muses. First, therefore, take this following passage respecting the violation of music, and then we will go on to consider its opposition.

III. 47, 10. (690). "For now, indeed, we have traced such a fountain of seditions as well needs healing; and first consider, in this matter, how, and against what, the kings of Argos and Messene sinned, when they destroyed at once themselves and the power of the Greeks, marvellous great as it was in their time. Was not their sin that they refused to acknowledge the utter rightness of Hesiod in his saying that 'the half is often more than the whole'? For, when to take the whole is mischievous, but the half, a measured and moderated good, then the measured good is more than the unmeasurêd, as better is more than worse.

"*The Cretan.* It is a most right and wise saying.

"*The Athenian.* Whether, then, are we to think, of the kings, that it was this error in *their* hearts that in each several case destroyed them, or that the mischief entered first into the heart of the people?

"*The Cretan.* In all likelihood, for the most part, the disease was in the kings, living proudly because of luxury.

"*The Athenian.* Is it not evident, as well as likely, that the kings first fell into this guilt of grasping at more than the established laws gave them: and with what by speech and oath they had approved, they kept no symphony in act; and their diaphony, as we said, being indeed the uttermost ignorance, yet seeming wisdom, through breaking of tune and sharp amusia, destroyed all those noble things?"

Now in applying this great sentence of Plato's to the parallel time in England, when her kings "kept no symphony in act with what by word and oath they had approved," and so destroyed at once themselves and the English power, "marvellous great as it was in their time"—the 'sharp amusia' of Charles I. and his Cavaliers was indeed in grasping at more than the established laws gave them; but an entirely contrary—or, one might technically call it, 'flat amusia'—met it on the other side, and ruined Cromwell and his Roundheads. Of which flat or dead amusia Plato had seen no instance, and could not imagine it; and for the laying bare its root, we must seek to the truest philosopher of our own days, from whose good company I have too long kept the reader,—Walter Scott.

When he was sitting to Northcote, (who told the story to my father, not once nor twice, but I think it is in Hazlitt's conversations of Northcote also,) the old painter, speaking with a painter's wonder of the intricate design of the Waverley Novels, said that one chief source of his delight

in them was that "he never knew what was coming."

"Nor I neither," answered Sir Walter.

Now this reply, though of course partly playful, and made for the sake of its momentary point, was deeply true, in a sense which Sir Walter himself was not conscious of. He was conscious of it only as a weakness,—not as a strength. His beautiful confession of it as a weakness is here in my book-case behind me, written in his own hand, in the introduction to the 'Fortunes of Nigel.' I take it reverently down, and copy it from the dear old manuscript, written as it is at temperate speed, the letters all perfectly formed, but with no loss of time in dotting *i* s, crossing *t* s, writing mute *e* s in past participles, or in punctuation; the current dash and full period alone being used. I copy with scrupulous care, adding no stop where stop is not.

"*Captain*" (Clutterbuck) Respect for yourself then ought to teach caution—

Author. Aye if caution could augment my title to success—But to confess to you the truth the books and passages in which I have succeeded have uniformly been written with the greatest rapidity and when I have seen some of these placed in opposition with others and commended as more highly finished I could appeal to pen and standish that those in which I have come feebly off were by much the more labourd. I have not been fool enough to neglect ordinary precautions. I have laid down my work to scale divided it into volumes

and chapters and endeavourd to construct a story which should evolve itself gradually and strikingly maintain suspense and stimulate curiosity and finally terminate in a striking catastrophe—But I think there is a dæmon which seats himself upon the feather of my pen when I begin to write and ~~guides~~ * leads it astray from the purpose Characters expand under my hand incidents are multiplied the story lingers while the materials increase—my regular mansion turns out a Gothic anomaly and the work is done long before I have attained the end I proposed

Captain. Resolution and determined forbearance might remedy that evil.

Author. Alas my dear Sir you do not know the fever of paternal affection—When I light on such a character as Baillie Jarvie or Dalgety my imagination brightens and my conception becomes clearer at every step which I make in his company although it leads me many a weary mile away from the regular road and forces me to leap hedge and ditch to get back into the route again—†

If I resist the temptation as you advise me my thoughts become prosy flat and dull I write painfully to myself and under a consciousness of flagging which makes me flag—the sunshine with which fancy had invested the incidents departs

* The only word altered in the whole passage, and that on the instant.

† The closing passage of the author's paragraph, down to 'bewitchd,' is an addition on the lateral leaf.

from them and leaves everything flat and gloomy —I am no more the same author than the dog in a wheel condemnd to go round and round for hours is like the same dog merrily chasing his own tail and gamboling in all the frolic of freedom—In short I think I am bewitchd—

Captain. Nay Sir if you plead sorcery there is no more to be said"

Alas, he did but half know how truly he had right to plead sorcery, feeling the witchcraft, yet not believing in it, nor knowing that it was indeed an angel that guided, not a dæmon, (I am forced for once to use with him the Greek word in its Presbyterian sense) that misled, his hand, as it wrote in gladness the fast-coming fancies. For truly in that involuntary vision was the true 'design,' and Scott's work differs from all other modern fiction by its exquisiteness of art, precisely *because* he did not 'know what was coming.' For, as I have a thousand times before asserted—though hitherto always in vain,—no great composition was ever produced by composing, nor by arranging chapters and dividing volumes; but only with the same heavenly involuntariness in which a bird builds her nest. And among the other virtues of the great classic masters, this of enchanted Design is of all the least visible to the present apothecary mind: for although, when I first gave analysis of the inventive power in 'Modern Painters,' I was best able to illustrate its combining method by showing

that "there was something like it in chemistry," it is precisely what *is* like it in chemistry, that the chemist of to-day denies.

But one farther great, and greatest, sign of the Divinity in this enchanted work of the classic masters, I did not then assert,—for, indeed, I had not then myself discerned it,—namely, that this power of noble composition is never given but with accompanying instinct of moral law; and that so severe, that the apparently too complete and ideal justice which it proclaims has received universally the name of 'poetical' justice—the justice conceived only by the men of consummate imaginative power. So that to say of any man that he has power of design, is at once to say of him that he is using it on God's side; for it can only have been taught him by that Master, and cannot be taught by the use of it against Him. And therefore every great composition in the world, every great piece of painting or literature—without any exception, from the birth of Man to this hour—is an assertion of moral law, as strict, when we examine it, as the Eumenides or the Divina Commedia; while the total collapse of all power of artistic design in Italy at this day has been signalized and sealed by the production of an epic poem in praise of the Devil, and in declaration that God is a malignant 'Larva.'*

And this so-called poetical justice, asserted by the

* A highly laudatory review of this work, in two successive parts, will be found in the columns of the Venetian journal *Il Tempo*, in the winter of 1876–77.

great designers, consists not only in the gracing of virtue with her own proper rewards of mental peace and spiritual victory; but in the proportioning also of worldly prosperity to visible virtue; and the manifestation, therefore, of the presence of the Father in this world, no less than in that which is to come. So that, if the life-work of any man of unquestioned genius does not assert this visible justice, but, on the contrary, exhibits good and gentle persons in unredeemed distress or destruction,—that work will invariably be found to show no power of design; but to be merely the consecutive collection of interesting circumstances well described, as continually the best work of Balzac, George Sand, and other good novelists of the second order. In some separate pieces, the great masters will indeed exhibit the darkest mystery of human fate, but never without showing, even then, that the catastrophe is owing in the root of it to the violation of some moral law: "*She hath deceived her father,* —and may thee." The root of the entire tragedy is marked by the mighty master in that one line—the double sin, namely, of daughter and father; of the first in too lawlessly forgetting her own people, and her father's house; and of the second, in allowing his pride and selfishness to conquer his paternal love, and harden him, not only in abandonment of his paternal duty, but in calumnious insult to his child. Nor, even thus, is Shakespeare content without marking, in the name of the victim of Evil Fortune, his purpose in the tragedy, of showing that there *is*

such a thing as Destiny, permitted to veil the otherwise clear Providence, and to leave it only to be found by noble Will, and proved by noble Faith.

Although always, in reading Scott, one thinks the story one has last finished, the best, there can be little question that the one which has right of pre-eminence is the 'Heart of Midlothian,' being devoted to the portraiture of the purest life, and most vital religion, of his native country.

It is also the most distinct in its assertion of the moral law; the assignment of earthly reward and punishment being, in this story, as accurately proportioned to the degrees of virtue and vice as the lights and shades of a photograph to the force of the rays. The absolute truth and faith of Jeanie make the suffering through which she has to pass the ultimate cause of an entirely prosperous and peaceful life for herself, her father, and her lover: the falsehood and vanity of Effie prepare for her a life of falsehood and vanity: the pride of David Deans is made the chief instrument of his humiliation; and the self-confidence which separated him from true fellowship with his brother-Christians, becomes the cause of his eternal separation from his child.

Also, there is no other analysis of the good and evil of the pure Protestant faith which can be for a moment compared to that in the 'Heart of Midlothian,' showing that in an entirely simple, strong, and modest soul, it brings forth fruit of all good works and kindly thoughts; but that, when it meets

with innate pride, and the unconquerable selfishness which comes from want of sympathy, it leads into ludicrous and fatal self-worship, mercilessness to the errors, whether in thought or conduct, of others; and blindness to the teaching of God Himself, where it is contrary to the devotee's own habits of thought. There is no other form of the Christian religion which so insolently ignores all Scripture that makes against it, or gathers with so passionate and irrational embrace all Scripture that makes for it.

And the entire course of the tragic story in the 'Heart of Midlothian' comes of the 'Museless' hardness of nature, brought upon David Deans by the persecution in his early life, which changed healthy and innocent passion into religious pride,—"I bless God, (with that singular worthy, Peter Walker, the packman at Bristo port,) that ordered my lot in my dancing days, so that fear of my head and throat, dread of bloody rope and swift bullet, cauld and hunger, wetness and weariness, stopped the lightness of my head, and the wantonness of my feet. And now, if I hear ye, quean lassies, sae muckle as name dancing, or think there's such a thing in the world as flinging to fiddlers' sounds and pipers' springs, as sure as my father's spirit is with the just, ye shall be no more either charge or concern of mine."

Over the bronze sculpture of this insolent pride, Scott instantly casts, in the following sentence, ("Gang in then, hinnies," etc.) the redeeming glow

of paternal love; but he makes it, nevertheless, the cause of all the misery that follows, to the end of the old man's life:—

"The objurgation of David Deans, however well meant, was unhappily timed. It created a division of feeling in Effie's bosom, and deterred her from her intended confidence in her sister. 'She wad haud me nae better than the dirt below her feet,' said Effie to herself, 'were I to confess that I hae danced wi' him four times on the green down by, and ance at Maggie Macqueen's.'"

Such, and no more than such, the little sin that day concealed—sin only *in* concealment. And the fate of her life turns on the Fear and the Silence of a moment.

But for the effective and final cause of it, on that Deadly Muselessness of the Cameronian leaders, who indeed would read of the daughter of Herodias dancing before Herod, but never of the son of Jesse dancing before the Lord; and banished sackbut and psaltery, for signals in the service of Nebuchadnezzar, forgetting that the last law of Moses and last prayer of David were written in song.

And this gloomy forgetfulness, or worse,—presumptuous defiance, of the laws of the nature given by his Maker to man, left, since the Reformation, the best means of early education chiefly in the hands of the adversary of souls; and thus defiled the sanctuary of joy in the human heart, and left it desolate for the satyrs to dance there, and the wild beasts of the islands to cry.

Which satyric dance and sirenic song, accomplished, both, with all the finish of science, and used in mimicry of every noble emotion towards God and man, become the uttermost, and worst—because the most traitorous—of blasphemies against the Master who gave us motion and voice submissive to other laws than of the elements; and would have made us 'as happy'—nay, how much happier!—than the wave that dances on the sea; and how much more glorious in praise than the forests, though they clap their hands, and the hills, that rejoice together before the Lord.

And this cry of the wild beasts of the islands, or sirenic blasphemy, has in modern days become twofold; consisting first in the mimicry of *devotion* for pleasure, in the oratorio, withering the life of religion into dead bones on the siren-sands; and secondly, the mimicry of *compassion*, for pleasure, in the opera, wasting the pity and love which should overflow in active life, on the ghastliest visions of fictitious grief and horriblest decoration of simulated death. But these two blasphemies had become one, in the Greek religious service of Plato's time. "For, indeed,—VII. 289, 20. (800)—this has come to pass in nearly all our cities, that when any public sacrifice is made to the Gods, not one chorus only, but many choruses, and standing, not reverently far from the altars, but beside them," (yes, in the very cathedrals themselves,) "pour forth blasphemies of sacred things," (not mockeries, observe, but songs precisely corresponding to our

oratorios—that is to say, turning dramatic prayer into a solemn sensual pleasure,) "both with word and rhythm, and the most wailing harmonies, racking the souls of the hearers; and whosoever can make the sacrificing people weep the most, to him is the victory. Such lamentations, if indeed the citizens have need to hear, let it be on accursed instead of festal days, and from hired mourners as at funerals. But that we may get rid at once of the need of speaking of such things, shall we not accept, for the mould and seal of all song, Euphemy, the speaking the good of all things, and not Blasphemy, the speaking their sorrow?"

Which first law of noble song is taught us by the myth that Euphemy was the Nurse of the Muses —(her statue was still on Parnassus in Pausanias' time)—together with that of Linus, who is the master of true dirge music, used in permitted lamentation.

And here, in good time, comes to me a note from one of my kindest and best teachers, in old time, in the Greek Vase room of the British Museum,* which points out one fact respecting the physical origin of the music-myths, wholly new to me:—

"On reading your last Fors I was reminded of what used to seem to me an inconsistency of the Greeks in assigning so much of a harmonizing

* Mr. A. S. Murray, the first, I believe, of our Greek antiquaries who distinguished, in the British Museum, the vases executed in imitation of archaic forms by late Roman artists, from real Athenian archaic pottery.

influence to music for the practical purposes of education, while in their myths they regularly associated it with competition, and cruel punishment of the loser. The Muses competed with the Sirens—won, and plucked their feathers to make crowns of. Apollo competed with Marsyas —won, and had him flayed alive. Apollo and Pan had a dispute about the merits of their favourite instruments; and Midas, because he decided for Pan, had his ears lengthened at the command of Apollo. The Muses competed with the daughters of Pieros, who failed, and lost their life. It looks as if there had been a Greek Eisteddfod! But, seriously, it is not easy to be confident about an explanation of this mythical feature of Music. As regards Apollo and Marsyas, it is to be observed that Marsyas was a river god, who made the first flute from the reeds of his own river, and thus he would represent the music of flowing water, and of wind in the reeds. Apollo was the god of the music of animate nature; the time of his supremacy was summer. The time when Marsyas had it all his own way was winter. In summer his stream was dried up, and, as the myth says, he was flayed alive. The competition was, then, in the first place, between the music of summer and the music of winter; and, in the second place, between the music of animate nature and that of water and wind. This explanation would also apply to the competition of the Muses and Sirens, since the latter represented the music of the seashore, while

the Muses were associated with Apollo, and would represent whatever principle he represented. The myth of the daughters of Pieros is probably only a variant of that of the Sirens. As regards the rivalry of Apollo and Pan, I do not see any satisfactory explanation of it. It was comparatively slight, and the consequences to Midas were not so dreadful after all."

The interpretation here of the punishment of Marsyas as the drying up of the river, whose 'stony channel in the sun' so often, in Greece and Italy, mocks us with memory of sweet waters in the drought of summer, is, as I said, wholly new to me, and, I doubt not, true. And the meaning of the other myths will surely be open enough to the reader who has followed Plato thus far: but one more must be added to complete the cycle of them—the contest of Dionysus with the Tyrrhenian pirates;—and then we have the three orders of the Deities of music throughout the ages of Man,—the Muses, Apollo, and Dionysus,—each with their definite adversaries. The Muses, whose office is the teaching of sacred pleasures to childhood, have for adversaries the Sirens, who teach sinful pleasure; Apollo, who teaches intellectual, or historic, therefore worded, music, to men of middle age, has for adversary Marsyas, who teaches the wordless music of the reeds and rivers; and, finally, Dionysus, who teaches the cheerful music which is to be the wine of old age, has for adversary the commercial pirate, who would sell the god for gain, and drink no wine

but gold. And of these three contests, bearing as they do in their issue on all things festive and pantomimic, I reserve discussion for my seventh year's Christmas Fors; such discussion being, I hope, likely to prove serviceable to many of my honest friends, who are losing their strength in forbidding men to drink, when they should be helping them to eat; and cannot for the life of them understand what, long since pointed out to them, they will find irrefragably true, that "the holiness of the parsonage and parson at one end of the village, can only be established in the holiness of the tavern and tapster at the other."

LETTER LXXXIV

THE LAST WORDS OF THE VIRGIN

"THEY HAVE NO WINE."
"WHATSOEVER HE SAITH UNTO YOU, DO IT."

BRANTWOOD, 29*th Oct.* 1877.

THESE, the last recorded words of the Mother of Christ, and the only ones recorded during the period of His ministry, (the "desiring to see thee" being told him by a stranger's lips,) I will take, with due pardon asked of faithful Protestant readers, for the motto, since they are the sum, of all that I have been permitted to speak, in God's name, now these seven years.

The first sentence of these two, contains the appeal of the workman's wife, to her son, for the help of the poor of all the earth.

The second, the command of the Lord's mother, to the people of all the earth, that they should serve the Lord.

This day last year, I was walking with a dear friend, and resting long, laid on the dry leaves, in the sunset, under the vineyard-trellises of the little range of hills which, five miles west of Verona, look down on the Lago di Garda at about the distance

from its shore that Cana is from the Lake of Galilee; —(the Madonna had walked to the bridal some four miles and a half). It was a Sunday evening, golden and calm; all the vine leaves quiet; and the soft clouds held at pause in the west, round the mountains that Virgil knew so well, blue above the level reeds of Mincio. But we had to get under the crest of the hill, and lie down under cover, as if avoiding an enemy's fire, to get out of hearing of the discordant practice, in fanfaronade, of the military recruits of the village,—modern Italy, under the teaching of the Marsyas of Mincio, delighting herself on the Lord's day in that, doubtless, much civilized, but far from mellifluous, manner; triumphing that her monasteries were now for the most part turned into barracks, and her chapels into stables. We, for our own part, in no wise exultant nor exhilarated, but shrinking down under the shelter of the hill, and shadows of its fruitful roofs, talked, as the sun went down.

We talked of the aspect of the village which had sent out its active life, marching to these new melodies; and whose declining life we had seen as we drove through it, half an hour before. An old, far-straggling village, its main street following the brow of the hill, with gardens at the backs of the houses, looking towards the sacred mountains and the uncounted towers of purple Verona.

If ever peace, and joy, and sweet life on earth might be possible for men, it is so here, and in such places,—few, on the wide earth, but many in the

bosom of infinitely blessed, infinitely desolate Italy. Its people were sitting at their doors, quietly working—the women at least,—the old men at rest behind them. A worthy and gentle race; but utterly poor, utterly untaught the things that in *this* world make for their peace. Taught anciently, other things, by the steel of Ezzelin; taught anew the same lesson, by the victor of Arcola, and the vanquished of Solferino,—and the supreme evil risen on the ruin of both.

There they sate—the true race of Northern Italy, mere prey for the vulture,—patient, silent, hopeless, careless: infinitude of accustomed and bewildered sorrow written in every line of their faces, unnerving every motion of their hands, slackening the spring in all their limbs. And their blood has been poured out like water, age after age, and risen round the wine-press, even to the horse-bridles. And of the peace on earth, and the goodwill towards men, which He who trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Him—died to bring them, they have heard by the hearing of the ear,—their eyes have not seen.

"They have no wine."

But He Himself has been always with them, though they saw Him not, and they have had the deepest of His blessings. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." And in the faith of these, and such as these,—in the voiceless religion and uncomplaining duty of the peasant races, throughout Europe,—is now that Church on earth,

against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail. And on the part taken in ministry to them, or in oppressing them, depends now the judgment between the righteous and the wicked servant, which the Lord, who has so long delayed His coming, will assuredly now, at no far-off time, require.

"But and if that servant shall say in his heart, 'My Lord delayeth His coming'—

* * * * * *

Shall I go on writing? We have all read the passage so often that it falls on our thoughts unfelt, as if its words were dead leaves. We will write and read it more slowly to-day—so please you.

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them their meat in due season?"

Over *His* household,—He probably having His eyes upon it, then, whether *you* have or not. But He has made you ruler over it, that you may give it meat, in due season. Meat—literally, first of all. And that seasonably, according to laws of duty, and not of chance. You are not to leave such giving to chance, still less to take advantage of chance, and buy the meat when meat is cheap, that you may 'in due season' sell it when meat is dear. You don't see that in the parable? No, you cannot find it. 'Tis not in the bond. You will find something else is not in the bond too, presently.

But at least this is plain enough, that you are to give meat—when it is due. "Yes, spiritual meat—

but not mutton"? Well, then—dine first on spiritual meat yourself. Whatever is on your own table, be it spiritual or fleshly, of *that* you are to distribute; and are made a ruler that you may distribute, and not live only to consume. You say I don't speak plain English, and you don't understand what I mean. It doesn't matter what I mean,—but if Christ hasn't put that plain enough for you—you had better go learn to read.

"Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that He shall make Him ruler over all His goods."

A vague hope, you think, to act upon? Well, if you only act on such hope, you will never either know, or get, what it means. No one but Christ can tell what *all* His goods are; and you have no business to mind, yet; for it is not the getting of these, but the doing His work, that you must care for yet awhile. Nevertheless, at spare times, it is no harm that you wonder a little where He has gone to, and what He is doing; and He has given you at least some hint of that, in another place.

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, *when He shall return* from the *wedding*." Nor a hint of it merely, but you may even hear, at quiet times, some murmur and syllabling of its music in the distance—"The Spirit, and the Bride, say, Come."

"But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart,

'My Lord delayeth His coming,' and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken——"

To 'smite'—too fine a word: it is, quite simply, to 'strike'—that same verb which every Eton boy used to have, (and mercifully) smitten into him. —You smite nobody now—boy or man—for their good, and spare the rod of *correction*. But you smite *unto death* with a will. What is the ram of an ironclad for?

"To eat and drink *with* the drunken." Not drunk himself—the upper servant; too well bred, he; but countenancing the drink that does not overcome him,—a goodly public tapster; charging also the poor twenty-two shillings for half a crown's worth of the drink he draws for them; boasting also of the prosperity of the house under his management. So many bottles, at least, his chief butlerhood can show emptied out of his Lord's cellar,—'and shall be exalted to honour, and for ever give the cup into Pharaoh's hand,' he thinks. Not lascivious, he, but frank in fellowship with all lasciviousness—a goodly speaker after Manchester Banquet,* and cautious not to add, personally, drunkenness to Thirlmere thirst.

"The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of. And shall cut him asunder,

* Compare description in 'Fors,' vol. i. p. 197, of the 'Entire Clerkly or Learned Company,' and the passage in 'Munera Pulveris' there referred to (§ 159).

and shall appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"*Cut him asunder.*"

Read now this—mighty among the foundational words of Human Law, showing forth the Divine Law.

"Tum Tullus, . . . Meti Suffeti, inquit, si ipse discere posses fidem ac fœdera servare, vivo tibi ea disciplina a me adhibita esset; nunc, quoniam tuum insanabile ingenium est, tu tuo supplicio doce humanum genus ea sancta credere quæ a te violata sunt. Ut igitur paulo ante, animum inter Fidenatem Romanamque rem ancipitem gessisti, ita jam corpus passim distrahendum dabis."*

And after, this:

"But there brake off; for one had caught mine eye,
Fix'd to a cross with three stakes on the ground:
He, when He saw me, writhed Himself throughout
Distorted, ruffling with deep sighs His beard.
And Catalano, who thereof was 'ware,
Thus spake: 'That piercèd spirit, whom intent
Thou view'st, was He who gave the Pharisees
Counsel, that it were fitting for one man
To suffer for the people. He doth lie

* ["Then said Tullus (Hostilius, King of Rome, to the Alban dictator)—Metius Suffetius, if thou thyself couldst learn to keep faith and covenants, that teaching I should have given thee, and thou shouldst live. Now, since thy heart is incurably evil, do thou by thy punishment teach the world to hold sacred that which thou hast dishonoured. Whereas therefore, a while since, thy mind was divided betwixt Fidena and Rome, so now shall thy body be divided and drawn asunder."—Livy, I. 23.]

Transverse ; nor any passes, but Him first
Behoves make feeling trial how each weighs.
In straits like this along the foss are placed
The father of His consort, and the rest
Partakers in that counsel, seed of ill
And sorrow to the Jews.' I noted, then,
How Virgil gazed with wonder upon Him,
Thus abjectly extended on the cross
In banishment eternal."

And after, this :

"Who, e'en in words unfetter'd, might at full
Tell of the wounds and blood that now I saw,
Though he repeated oft the tale ? No tongue
So vast a theme could equal, speech and thought
Both impotent alike. If, in one band
Collected, stood the people all, whoe'er
Pour'd on Apulia's fateful soil their blood,
Slain by the Trojans ; and in that long war
When of the rings the measured booty made
A pile so high, as Rome's historian writes
Who errs not ; with the multitude, that felt
The girding force of Guiscard's Norman steel,
And those, the rest, whose bones are gathered yet
At Ceperano, there where treachery
Branded th' Apulian name, or where beyond
Thy walls, O Tagliacozzo, without arms
The old Alardo conquer'd :—and his limbs
One were to show transpierced, another his
Clean lopt away,—a spectacle like this
Were but a thing of nought, to the hideous sight
Of the ninth chasm.

* * * * *

Without doubt,
I saw, and yet it seems to pass before me,
A headless trunk, that even as the rest
Of the sad flock paced onward. By the hair
It bore the sever'd member, lantern-wise

> Pendent in hand, which look'd at us, and said,
> 'Woe's me!' The spirit lighted thus himself;
> And two there were in one, and one in two:
> How that may be, he knows who ordereth so."

I have no time to translate "him who errs not,"* nor to comment on the Dante,—whoso readeth, let him understand,—only this much, that the hypocrisy of the priest who counselled that the King of the Jews should die for the people, and the division of heart in the evil statesman who raised up son against father in the earthly kingship of England,† are for ever types of the hypocrisy of the Pharisee and Scribe, — penetrating, through the Church of the nation, and the Scripture or Press of it, into the whole body politic of it; cutting it verily in sunder, as a house divided against itself; and appointing for it, with its rulers, its portion—where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Now, therefore, if there be any God, and if there be any virtue, and if there be any truth, choose ye this day, rulers of men, whom you will serve. Your hypocrisy is not in pretending to be what you are not; but in *being* in the uttermost nature of you —Nothing—but dead bodies in coffins suspended between Heaven and Earth, God and Mammon.

If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him. You would fain be respectful to

* "Che non erra." I never till now, in reading this passage for my present purpose, noticed these wonderful words of Dante's, spoken of Livy. True, in the grandest sense.

† Read the story of Henry II. in 'Fors,' vol. i., pp. 48, 49.

Baal, keep smooth with Belial, dine with Moloch, sup, with golden spoon of sufficient length, with Beelzebub;—and kiss the Master to bid Him good-night. Nay, even my kind and honest friends make, all of them, answer to my message: 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it.—Suffer me first to bury my father.—I have married a wife—have not I to keep her and my children first of all? Behold, I cannot come.'

So after this seventh year, I am going out into the highways and hedges: but now no more with expostulation. I have wearied myself in the fire enough; and now, under the wild roses and traveller's joy of the lane hedges, will take what rest may be, in my pilgrimage.

I thought to have finished my blameful work before now, but Fors would not have it so;—now, I am well convinced she will let me follow the peaceful way towards the pleasant hills. Henceforth, the main work of 'Fors' will be constructive only; and I shall allow in the text of it no syllable of complaint or scorn. When notable public abuses or sins are brought to my knowledge, I will bear witness against them simply, laying the evidence of them open in my Correspondence, but sifted before it is printed; following up myself, the while, in plain directions, or happy studies, St. George's separate work, and lessoning.

Separate, I say once more, it must be; and cannot become work at all until it is so. It is the work of a world-wide monastery; protesting, by

patient, not violent, deed, and fearless, yet henceforward unpassionate, word, against the evil of this our day, till in its heart and force it be ended.

Of which evil I here resume the entire assertion made in 'Fors,' up to this time, in few words.

All social evils and religious errors arise out of the pillage of the labourer by the idler: the idler leaving him only enough to live on (and even that miserably,*) and taking all the rest of the produce of his work to spend in his own luxury, or in the toys with which he beguiles his idleness.

And this is done, and has from time immemorial been done, in all so-called civilized, but in reality corrupted, countries,—first by the landlords; then, under their direction, by the three chief so-called gentlemanly 'professions,' of soldier, lawyer, and priest; and, lastly, by the merchant and usurer. The landlord pillages by direct force, seizing the land, and saying to the labourer, You shall not live on this earth, but shall here die, unless you give me all the fruit of your labour but your bare living:—the soldier pillages by persuading the peasantry to fight, and then getting himself paid for skill in leading them to death:—the lawyer pillages by prolonging their personal quarrels with marketable ingenuity; and the priest by selling the Gospel, and getting paid for theatrical displays of it.† All this has to cease, inevitably and totally:

* "Maintain him—yes—but how?"—question asked of me by a working girl, long ago.

† Compare 'Unto this Last,' p. 31. The three professions said

Peace, Justice, and the Word of God must be *given* to the people, not sold. And these *can* only be given by a true Hierarchy and Royalty, beginning at the throne of God, and descending, by sacred stair let down from heaven, to bless and keep all the Holy creatures of God, man and beast, and to condemn and destroy the unholy. And in this Hierarchy and Royalty all the servants of God have part, being made priests and kings to Him, that they may feed His people with food of angels and food of men; teaching the word of God with power, and breaking and pouring the Sacrament of Bread and Wine from house to house, in remembrance of Christ, and in gladness and singleness of heart; the priest's function at the altar and in the tabernacle, at one end of the village, being only holy in the fulfilment of the deacon's function at the table and in the taberna, at the other.

And so, out of the true earthly kingdom, in fulness of time, shall come the heavenly kingdom, when the tabernacle of God shall be with men; no priest needed more for ministry, because all the earth will be Temple; nor bread nor wine needed more for mortal food, or fading memory, but the water of life given to him that is athirst, and the fruits of the trees of healing.

Into which kingdom that we may enter, let us read now the last words of the King when He

there to be 'necessary' are the pastor's, physician's, and merchant's. The 'pastor' is the Giver of Meat, whose office I now explain in its fulness.

left us for His Bridal, in which is the direct and practical warning of which the parable of the Servant was the shadow.

It was, given, as you know, to Seven Churches, that live no more,—they having refused the word of His lips, and been consumed by the sword of His lips. Yet to all men the command remains—He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.

They lie along the hills, and across the plain, of Lydia, sweeping in one wide curve like a flight of birds or a swirl of cloud—(if you draw them by themselves on the map you will see)—all of them either in Lydia itself, or on the frontier of it: in nature, Lydian all—richest in gold, delicatest in luxury, softest in music, tenderest in art, of the then world. They unite the capacities and felicities of the Asiatic and the Greek: had the last message of Christ been given to the Churches in Greece, it would have been to Europe in imperfect age; if to the Churches in Syria, to Asia in imperfect age:—written to Lydia, it is written to the world, and for ever.

It is written 'to the Angels of the Seven Churches.' I have told you what 'angels' meant to the Heathen. What do you, a Christian, mean by them? What is meant by them here?

Commonly, the word is interpreted of the Bishops of these Churches; and since, in every living Church, its Bishop, if it have any, must speak with the spirit and in the authority of its angel, there is indeed a

lower and literal sense in which the interpretation is true; (thus I have called the Archbishop of Canterbury an angel in 'Fors,' vol. iii. p. 420;) but, in the higher and absolutely true sense, each several charge is here given to the Guardian Spirit of each several Church, the one appointed of Heaven to guide it. Compare 'Bibliotheca Pastorum,' vol. i., Preface, pp. xii to xv, closing with the words of Plato which I repeat here: "For such cities as no angel, but only a mortal, governs, there is no possible avoidance of evil and pain."

Modern Christians, in the beautiful simplicity of their selfishness, think—every mother of them—that it is quite natural and likely that their own baby should have an angel to take care of it, all to itself: but they cannot fancy such a thing as that an angel should take the liberty of interfering with the actions of a grown-up person,—how much less that one should meddle or make with a society of grown-up persons, or be present, and make any tacit suggestions, in a parliamentary debate. But the address here to the angel of the capital city, Sardis, marks the sense clearly: "These things saith He which hath the Seven Stars in His right hand, *and*" (that is to say) "the Seven Spirits of God."

And the charge is from the Spirit of God to each of these seven angels, reigning over and in the hearts of the whole body of the believers in every Church; followed always by the dateless adjuration, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the *Spirit* saith unto the Churches."

The address to each consists of four parts:—

First. The assertion of some special attribute of the Lord of the Churches, in virtue of which, and respect to which, He specially addresses that particular body of believers.

Second. The laying bare of the Church's heart, as known to its Lord.

Third. The judgment on that state of the heart, and promise or threat of a future reward or punishment, assigned accordingly, in virtue of the Lord's special attribute, before alleged.

Fourth. The promise, also in virtue of such special attribute, to all Christians who overcome, as their Lord overcame, in the temptation with which the Church under judgment is contending.

That we may better understand this scheme, and its sequence, let us take first the four divisions of charge to the Churches in succession, and then read the charges in their detail.

I. EPHESUS.

The Attribute.—That holdeth the seven stars, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

The Declaration.—Thou hast left thy first love.

The Judgment.—I will move thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

The Promise.—(Always, 'to him that overcometh.') I will give to eat of the tree of life.

II. SMYRNA.

The Attribute.—The First and the Last, which was dead, and is alive.

The Declaration.—I know thy sorrow,—and thy patience.

The Judgment.—Be thou faithful to death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

The Promise.—He shall not be hurt of the second death.

III. PERGAMOS.

The Attribute.—He which hath the sharp sword with two edges.

The Declaration.—Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam.

The Judgment.—I will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth.

The Promise.—I will give him to eat of the hidden manna.

IV. THYATIRA.

The Attribute.—That hath His eyes like a flame of fire.

The Declaration.—Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel.

The Judgment.—I will kill her children with death.

The Promise.—I will give him the morning star.

V. SARDIS.

The Attribute.—That hath the seven Spirits of God.

The Declaration.—Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis.

The Judgment.—They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.

The Promise.—I will confess his name before my Father and His angels.

VI. PHILADELPHIA.

The Attribute.—He that hath the key of David.

The Declaration.—I have set before thee an open door.

The Judgment.—I will keep thee from the hour of temptation.

The Promise.—He shall go out of my temple no more.

VII. LAODICEA.

The Attribute.—The Beginning of the Creation of God.

The Declaration.—Thou art poor and miserable.

The Judgment.—Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

The Promise.—I will grant him to sit with Me in My throne.

Let us now read the charges in their detail, that we may understand them as they are given to ourselves.

Observe, first, they all begin with the same words, "I know thy *works*."

Not even the maddest and blindest of Antinomian teachers could have eluded the weight of this fact, but that, in the following address to each Church, its 'work' is spoken of as the state of its heart.

Of which the interpretation is nevertheless quite simple; namely, that the thing looked at by God first, in every Christian man, is his work;—without that, there is no more talk or thought of him. "Cut him down—why cumbereth he the ground?" But, the work being shown, has next to be tested. In what spirit was this done,—in faith and charity, or in disobedient pride? "You have fed the poor? yes; but did you do it to get a commission on the dishes, or because you loved the poor? You lent to the poor,—was it in true faith that you lent to *Me*, or to get money out of my poor by usury in defiance of Me? You thought it a good work—did you? Had you never heard then—'This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent'"?

And now we take the separate charges, one by one, in their fulness:—

I. Ephesus. — The attribute is essentially the spiritual power of Christ, in His people,—the 'lamp' of the virgins, the 'light of the world' of the Sermon on the Mount.

The Declaration praises the intensity of this in the Church, and—which is the notablest thing for *us* in the whole series of the charges—it asserts the burning of the Spirit of Christ in the Church to be especially shown because it "cannot bear them which are evil." This fierceness against sin, which we are so proud of being well quit of, is the very life of a Church;—the toleration of sin is the dying of its lamp. How indeed should it shine before men, if it mixed itself in the soot and fog of sin?

So again, although the Spirit is beginning to burn dim, and thou hast left thy first love, yet, *this* 'thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes.' (See note below on Pergamos.)

The promise is of fullest life in the midst of the Paradise and garden of God. Compare all the prophetic descriptions of living persons, or states, as the trees in the garden of God; and the blessing of the first Psalm.

II. Smyrna.—The attribute is that of Christ's endurance of death. The declaration, that the faithful Church is now dying, with Him, the noble death of the righteous, and shall live for evermore. The promise, that over those who so endure the slow pain of death in grief, for Christ's sake, the second death hath no power.

III. Pergamos.—The attribute is of Christ the Judge, visiting for sin; the declaration, that the Church has in it the sin of the Nicolaitanes, or of Balaam,—using its grace and inspiration to forward its worldly interest, and grieved at heart because it

has the Holy Ghost;—the darkest of blasphemies. Against this, 'Behold, I come quickly, and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth.'

The promise, that he who has kept his lips from blasphemy shall eat of the hidden manna: the word, not the sword, of the lips of Christ. "How sweet is Thy word unto my lips."

The metaphor of the stone, and the new name, I do not yet securely understand.

IV. Thyatira.—The attribute: "That hath his eyes like a flame of fire," (searching the heart,) "his feet like fine brass," (treading the earth, yet in purity, the type of all Christian practical life, unsoiled, whatever it treads on); but remember, lest you should think this in any wise opposed to the sense of the charge to Ephesus, that you may *tread* on foulness, yet remain undefiled; but not lie down in it and remain so.

The praise is for charity and active labour,—and the labour more than the charity.

The woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, is, I believe, the teacher of labour for lascivious purpose, beginning by the adornment of sacred things, not verily for the honour of God, but for our own delight, (as more or less in all modern Ritualism). It is of all manner of sins the most difficult to search out, and detect the absolute root or secret danger of. It is the 'depth of Satan'—the most secret of his temptations, and the punishment of it, death in torture. For if our *charity* and *labour* are poisoned, what is there more to save us?

The reward of resistance is, to rule the nations with a rod of iron—(true work, against painted clay); and I will give him the morning star, (light of heaven, and morning-time for labour).

V. Sardis.—The attribute: "That hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars."

Again, the Lord of Life itself—the Giver of the Holy Ghost. (Having said thus, He breathed on them.) He questions, not of the poison or misuse of life, but of its *existence*. Strengthen the things that are left—that are ready to *die*. The white raiment is the transfiguration of the earthly frame by the inner life, even to the robe of it, "so as no fuller on earth can white them."

The judgment: I will come unto thee as a thief, (in thy darkness, to take away even that thou hast).

The promise: I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life.

VI. Philadelphia.—The attribute: He that is holy (separate from sin)—He that is true (separate from falsehood)—that hath the key of David, (of the city of David which is Zion, renewed and pure; conf. verse 12); that openeth, and no man shutteth (by *me* if any man enter in); and shutteth, and no man openeth,—(for without, are fornicators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie).

The praise, for faithfulness with a little strength, as of a soldier holding a little fortress in the midst of assaulting armies. Therefore the blessing, after that captivity of the strait siege—the lifting up of

the heads of the gates, and setting wide of the everlasting doors by the Lord, mighty in battle.

The promise: Him that overcometh will I make, not merely safe within my fortress temple, but a pillar of it—built on its rock, and bearing its vaults for ever.

VII. Laodicea. The attribute: the Faithful witness—the Word—the Beginning of Creation.

The sin, chaos of heart,—useless disorder of half-shaped life. Darkness on the face of the deep, and rejoicing in darkness,—as in these days of ours to the uttermost. Chaos in all things—dross for gold—slime for mortar—nakedness for glory—pathless morass for path—and the proud blind for guides.

The command, to try the gold, and purge the raiment, and anoint the eyes,—this order given as to the almost helpless—as men waked in the night, not girding their loins for journey, but in vague wonder at uncertain noise, who may turn again to their slumber, or, in wistful listening, hear the voice calling—'Behold, I stand at the door!'

It is the last of the temptations, bringing back the throne of Annihilation; and the victory over it is the final victory, giving rule, with the Son of God, over the recreate and never to be dissolved order of the perfect earth.

In which there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, "for the former things are passed away."

"Now, unto Him that is able to keep you from

falling, and to present you, faultless, before the Presence of His glory with exceeding joy;

"To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

The first seven years' Letters of Fors Clavigera were ended in Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 21st Nov., 1877.

FORS CLAVIGERA

SECOND SERIES

"YEA, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS, ESTABLISH THOU IT."

LETTER LXXXV

UNIQUE DOGMATISM

January, 1878.

THE series of letters which closed last year were always written, as from the first they were intended to be, on any matter which *chanced* to interest me, and in any humour which *chance* threw me into. By the adoption of the title 'Fors,' I meant (among other meanings) to indicate this desultory and accidental character of the work; and to imply, besides, my feeling, that, since I wrote wholly in the interests of others, it might justifiably be hoped that the chance to which I thus submitted myself would direct me better than any choice or method of my own.

So far as regards the subjects of this second series of letters, I shall retain my unfettered method, in

reliance on the direction of better wisdom than mine. But in my former letters, I also allowed myself to write on each subject, whatever came into my mind, wishing the reader, like a friend, to know exactly what my mind was. But as no candour will explain this to persons who have no feelings in common with me,—and as I think, by this time, enough has been shown to serve all purposes of such frankness, to those who can receive it,—henceforward, I shall endeavour to write, so far as I can judge, what may be serviceable to the reader, or acceptable by him; and only in some occasional and minor way, what may explain, or indulge, my own feelings.

Such change in my method of address is farther rendered necessary, because I perceive the address must be made to a wider circle of readers.

This book was begun in the limited effort to gather a society together for the cultivation of ground in a particular way;—a society having this special business, and no concern with the other work of the world. But the book has now become a call to all whom it can reach, to choose between being honest or dishonest; and if they choose to be honest, also to join together in a brotherhood separated, visibly and distinctly, from cheats and liars. And as I felt more and more led into this wider appeal, it has also been shown to me that, in this country of England, it must be made under obedience to the Angel of England;—the Spirit which taught our fathers their Faith, and which is

still striving with us in our Atheism. And since this was shown to me, I have taken all that I understand of the Book which our fathers believed to be divine, not, as in former times, only to enforce, on those who still believed it, obedience to its orders; but indeed for help and guidance to the whole body of our society.

The exposition of this broader law mingling more and more frequently in my past letters with that of the narrow action of St. George's Guild for the present help of our British peasantry, has much obscured the simplicity of that present aim, and raised up crowds of collateral questions, in debate of which the reader becomes doubtful of the rightness of even what might otherwise have been willingly approved by him: while, to retard his consent yet farther, I am compelled, by the accidents of the time, to allege certain principles of work which only my own long study of the results of the Art of Man upon his mind enable me to know for surety; and these are peculiarly offensive in an epoch which has long made—not only all its Arts mercenary, but even those mercenary forms of them subordinate to yet more servile occupations.

For example; I might perhaps, with some success, have urged the purchase and cultivation of waste land, and the orderly and kindly distribution of the food produced upon it, had not this advice been coupled with the discussion of the nature of Rent, and the assertion of the God-forbidden guilt of that Usury, of which Rent is the fatallest form.

And even if, in subtlety, I had withheld, or disguised, these deeper underlying laws, I should still have alienated the greater number of my possible adherents by the refusal to employ steam machinery, which may well bear, to the minds of persons educated in the midst of such mechanism, the aspect of an artist's idle and unrealizable prejudice. And this all the more, because the greater number of business-men, finding that their own opinions have been adopted without reflection, yet being perfectly content with the opinions so acquired, naturally suppose that mine have been as confidently collected where they could be found with least pains:—with the farther equally rational conclusion, that the opinions they have thus accidentally picked up themselves are more valuable and better selected than the by no means obviously preferable faggot of mine.

And, indeed, the thoughts of a man who from his youth up, and during a life persistently literary, has never written a word either for money or for vanity, nor even in the careless incontinence of the instinct for self-expression, but resolutely spoken only to teach or to praise others, must necessarily be incomprehensible in an age when Christian preaching itself has become merely a polite and convenient profession,—when the most noble and living literary faculties, like those of Scott and Dickens, are perverted by the will of the multitude, and perish in the struggle for its gold; and when the conceit even of the gravest men of science

provokes them to the competitive exhibition of their conjectural ingenuity, in fields where argument is impossible, and respecting matters on which even certainty would be profitless.

I believe, therefore, that it will be satisfactory to not a few of my readers, and generally serviceable, if I reproduce, and reply to, a portion of a not unfriendly critique which, appearing in the *Spectator* for 22nd September, 1877, sufficiently expressed this general notion of my work, necessarily held by men who are themselves writing and talking merely for profit or amusement, and have never taken the slightest pains to ascertain whether any single thing they say is true: nor are under any concern to know whether, after it has been sold in the permanent form of print, it will do harm or good to the buyer of it.

"MR. RUSKIN'S UNIQUE DOGMATISM.

"As we have often had occasion, if not exactly to remark, yet to imply, in what we have said of him, Mr. Ruskin is a very curious study. For simplicity, quaintness, and candour, his confidences to 'the workmen and labourers of Great Britain' in 'Fors Clavigera' are quite without example. For delicate irony of style, when he gets a subject that he fully understands, and intends to expose the ignorance, or, what is much worse, the affectation of knowledge which is not knowledge, of others, no man is his equal. But then as curious as anything else, in that strange medley of sparkling jewels, delicate spider-webs, and tangles of exquisite fronds which makes" (the writer should be on his guard

against the letter *s* in future passages of this descriptive character) "up Mr. Ruskin's mind, is the high-handed arrogance which is so strangely blended with his imperious modesty, and that, too, often when it is most grotesque. It is not, indeed, his arrogance, but his modest self-knowledge which speaks, when he says in this new number of the 'Fors' that though there are thousands of men in England able to conduct the business affairs of his Society better than he can, 'I do not believe there is another man in England able to organize our elementary lessons in Natural History and Art. And I am therefore wholly occupied in examining the growth of Anagallis tenella, and completing some notes on St. George's Chapel at Venice.' And no doubt he is quite right. Probably no one could watch the growth of Anagallis tenella to equal purpose, and no one else could complete his notes on St. George's Chapel without spoiling them. We are equally sure that he is wise, when he tells his readers that he must entirely decline any manner of political action which might hinder him 'from drawing leaves and flowers.' But what does astonish us is the supreme confidence,—or say, rather, hurricane of dictatorial passion,—though we do not use the word 'passion' in the sense of anger or irritation, but in the higher sense of mental white heat, which has no vexation in it, (*a*)—with which this humble student of leaves and flowers, of the Anagallis tenella and the beauties of St. George's Chapel at Venice, passes judgment on the whole structure of human society, from its earliest to its latest convolutions, and not only judgment, but the sweeping judgment of one who knows all its laws of structure and all its misshapen

(*a*) I don't understand. Probably there is not another so much vexed person as I at present extant of his grave.

growths with a sort of assurance which Mr. Ruskin would certainly never feel in relation to the true form, or the distortions of the true form, of the most minute fibre of one of his favourite leaves or flowers. Curiously enough, the humble learner of Nature speaking through plants and trees, is the most absolute scorner of Nature speaking through the organization of great societies and centuries of social experience. (*b*) We know well what Mr. Ruskin would say,—that the difference is great between the growth that is without moral freedom and the growth which has been for century after century distorted by the reckless abuse of moral freedom. And we quite admit the radical difference. But what strikes us as so strange is that this central difficulty of all,—how much is really due to the structural growth of a great society, and quite independent of any voluntary abuse which might be amended by voluntary effort, and how much is due to the false direction of individual wills, *never strikes Mr. Ruskin as a difficulty at all.* (*c*) On the contrary, he generalizes in his sweeping way, on social tendencies which appear to be (*d*) far more deeply ingrained in the very structure of human life than the veins of a leaf in the structure of a plant, with a confidence with which he would never for a moment dream of generalizing as to the true and normal growth of a favourite plant. Thus he tells us in the last number of Fors that 'Fors Clavigera is not in any way

(*b*) It *would* be curious, and much more, if it only *were* so.

(*c*—Italics mine.) On what grounds did the writer suppose this? When Dr. Christison analyzes a poison, and simply states his result, is it to be concluded he was struck by no difficulties in arriving at it, because he does not advise the public of his embarrassments?

(*d*) What does it matter what they *appear* to be?

intended as counsel adapted to the present state of the public mind, but it is the assertor of the code of eternal laws which the public mind *must* eventually submit itself to, or die; and I have really no more to do with the manners, customs, feelings, or modified conditions of piety in the modern England, which I have to warn of the accelerated approach either of Revolution or Destruction, than poor Jonah had with the qualifying amiabilities which might have been found in the Nineveh whose overthrow he was ordered to foretell in forty days.' But the curious part of the matter is that Mr. Ruskin, far from keeping to simple moral laws, denounces in the most vehement manner social arrangements which seem to most men (*e*) as little connected with them as they would have seemed to 'poor Jonah.' We are not aware, for instance, that Jonah denounced the use of machinery in Nineveh. Indeed, he seems to have availed himself of a ship, which is a great complication of machines, and to have 'paid his fare' from Joppa to Tyre, without supposing himself to have been accessory to anything evil in so doing. We are not aware, too, that Jonah held it to be wrong, as Mr. Ruskin holds it to be wrong, to charge for the use of a thing when you do not want to part with it altogether. These are practices which are so essentially interwoven alike with the most fundamental as also with the most superficial principles of social growth, that any one who assumes that they are rooted in moral evil is bound to be very careful to discriminate where the evil begins, and show that it can be avoided,—just as a naturalist who should reproach the trees on a

(*e*) What does it matter what they 'seem to most men'?

hill-side for sloping away from the blast they have to meet, should certainly first ask himself how the trees are to avoid the blast, or how, if they cannot avoid it, they are to help so altering their growth as to accommodate themselves to it. But Mr. Ruskin, though in relation to nature he is a true naturalist, in relation to human nature has in him nothing at all of the human naturalist. It never occurs to him apparently that here, too, are innumerable principles of growth which are quite independent of the will of man, and that it becomes the highest moralist to study humbly where the influence of the human will begins and where it ends, instead of rashly and sweepingly condemning, as due to a perverted morality, what is in innumerable cases a mere inevitable result of social structure. (*f*)

"Consider only how curiously different in spirit is the humility with which the great student of the laws of beauty watches the growth of the Anagallis tenella, and that with which he watches the growth of the formation of human opinion. A correspondent had objected to him that he speaks so contemptuously of some of the most trusted leaders of English workmen, of Goldwin Smith, for instance, and of John Stuart Mill. Disciples of such leaders, the writer had said, 'are hurt and made

(*f*) To this somewhat lengthily metaphorical paragraph, the needful answer may be brief, and without metaphor. To every 'social structure' which has rendered either wide national crime or wide national folly 'inevitable'—ruin is also 'inevitable.' Which is all I have necessarily to say; and which has been by me, now, very sorrowfully,—enough said. Nevertheless, somewhat more may be observed of England at this time,—namely, that she has no 'social structure' whatsoever; but is a mere heap of agonizing human maggots, scrambling and sprawling over each other for any manner of rotten eatable thing they can get a bite of.

angry, when names which they do not like are used of their leaders.' Mr. Ruskin's reply is quite a study in its way :—

'Well, my dear sir, I solemnly declare,' etc., down to 'ditches for ever.'—See Fors, September, 1877 (Letter LXXXI.).

Now observe that here Mr. Ruskin, who would follow the lines of a gossamer-thread sparkling in the morning dew with reverent wonder and conscientious accuracy, arraigns, first, the tendency of man to express immature and tentative views of passing events, (*g*) as if that were wholly due, not to a law of human nature, ! ! (*h*) but to those voluntary abuses of human freedom which might as effectually be arrested as murder or theft could be arrested by moral effort; next arraigns, if not the discovery of the printing-press (of which any one would suppose that he entertained a stern disapprobation), at least the inevitable (*i*) results of that discovery, precisely

(*g*) I have never recognized any such tendency in persons moderately well educated. What is their education for—if it cannot prevent their expressing immature views about *any*thing?

(*h*) I insert two notes of admiration. What 'law of human nature' shall we hear of next? If it cannot keep its thoughts in its mind, till they are digested,—I suppose we shall next hear it cannot keep its dinner in its stomach.

(*i*) There is nothing whatever of inevitable in the 'universal gabble of fools,' which is the lamentable fact I have alleged of the present times, whether they gabble with or without the help of printing-press. The power of saying a very foolish thing to a very large number of people at once, is of course a greater temptation to a foolish person than he was formerly liable to; but when the national mind, such as it is, becomes once aware of the mischief of all this, it is evitable enough—else there were an end to popular intelligence in the world.

as he would arraign a general prevalence of positive vice; and last of all, that he actually claims the power, as an old littérateur, to discern at sight 'what is eternally good and vital, and to strike away from it pitilessly what is worthless and venomous.' On the first two heads, as it seems to us, Mr. Ruskin arraigns laws of nature as practically unchangeable as any by which the sap rises in the tree and the blossom forms upon the flower. On the last head, he assumes a tremendous power in relation to subjects very far removed from these which he has made his own,——"

——I have lost the next leaf of the article, and may as well, it seems to me, close my extract here, for I do not know what subject the writer conceives me to have made my own, if *not* the quality of literature! If I am ever allowed, by public estimate, to know anything whatever, it is—how to write. My knowledge of painting is entirely denied by ninety-nine out of a hundred painters of the day; but the literary men are great hypocrites if they don't really think me, as they profess to do, fairly up to my work in that line. And what would an old littérateur be good for, if he did not know good writing from bad, and that without tasting more than a half page. And for the moral tendency of books—no such practised sagacity is needed to determine that. The sense, to a healthy mind, of being strengthened or enervated by reading, is just as definite and unmistakeable as the sense, to a healthy body, of being in fresh or foul air: and no more arrogance is involved in perceiving the stench, and forbidding

the reading of an unwholesome book, than in a physician's ordering the windows to be opened in a sick room. There is no question whatever concerning these matters, with any person who honestly desires to be informed about them;—the real arrogance is only in expressing judgments, either of books or anything else, respecting which we have taken no trouble to be informed. Here is my friend of the *Spectator*, for instance, commenting complacently on the vulgar gossip about my opinions of machinery, without even taking the trouble to look at what I said, else he would have found that, instead of condemning machinery, there is the widest and most daring plan in Fors for the adaptation of tide-mills to the British coasts that has yet been dreamt of in engineering; and that, so far from condemning ships, half the physical education of British youth is proposed by Fors to be conducted in them.

What the contents of Fors really are, however, it is little wonder that even my most studious friends do not at present know, broken up as these materials have been into a mere moraine of separate and seemingly jointless stones, out of which I must now build such Cyclopean wall as I shall have time and strength for. Therefore, during some time at least, the main business of this second series of letters will be only the arrangement for use, and clearer illustration, of the scattered contents of the first.

And I cannot begin with a more important subject,

or one of closer immediate interest, than that of the collection of rain, and management of streams. On this subject, I expect a series of papers from my friend Mr. Henry Willett, containing absolutely verified data: in the meantime I beg the reader to give his closest attention to the admirable statements by M. Viollet-le-Duc, on the results of human interference with Nature's management of streams and water-courses, Chapter XII. of his book on Mont Blanc, translated by Mr. Bucknall. I have before had occasion to speak with extreme sorrow of the errors in the theoretical parts of this work: but its practical intelligence is admirable.

Just in time, I get Mr. Willett's first sheet. His preface is too valuable to be given without some farther comment, but this following bit may serve us for this month:

"The increased frequency in modern days of upland floods appears to be due mainly to the increased want of the retention of the rainfall. Now it is true of all drainage matters that man has complete power over them at the beginning, where they are widely disseminated, and it is only when by the uniting ramifications over large areas a great accumulation is produced, that man becomes powerless to deal satisfactorily with it. Nothing ever is more senseless than the direct contravention of Nature's laws by the modern system of gathering together into one huge polluted stream the sewage of large towns. The waste and expense incurred, first in collecting, and then in attempting to separate and to apply to the

land the drainage of large towns, seems a standing instance of the folly and perversity of human arrangements, and *it can only be accounted for by the interest which attaches to the spending of large sums of money.*" (Italics mine.)

"It may be desirable at some future time to revert to this part of the subject, and to suggest the natural, simple, and inexpensive alternative plan.

"To return to the question of floods caused by rainfall only. The first and completely remunerating expenditure should be for providing tanks of filtered water for human drinking, etc., and reservoirs for cattle and manufacturing purposes, in the upland valleys and moorland glens which form the great collecting grounds of all the water which is now wastefully permitted to flow either into underground crevices and natural reservoirs, that it may be pumped up again at an enormous waste of time, labour, and money, or neglectfully permitted to deluge the habitations of which the improper erection on sites liable to flooding has been allowed.

"To turn for a moment to the distress and incurred expense in summer from want of the very same water which has been wasted in winter, I will give three or four instances which have come under my own knowledge. In the summer of 1876 I was put on shore from a yacht a few miles west of Swanage Bay, in Dorsetshire, and then, walking to the nearest village, I wanted to hire a pony-chaise from the landlady of the only inn, but she was obliged absolutely to refuse me because the pony was already overworked by having to drag water for the cows a perpendicular distance of from two hundred to three hundred feet from the valley beneath. Hardly a rain-shoot, and no reservoir, could be seen. A highly intelligent gentleman in Sussex,

the year before, remarked, 'I should not regret the rain coming and spoiling the remainder of my harvest, as it would thereby put an end to the great expense I am at in drawing water from the river for my flock of sheep.' In the village of Farnborough, Kent, there are two wells: one at the Hall, 160 feet deep, and a public one at the north-west of the village. In summer a man gets a good living by carting the water for the poor people, charging 1*d.* for six gallons, and earning from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a day. One agricultural labourer pays 5*d.* a week for his family supply in summer. 'He could catch more off his own cottage, but the spouts are out of order, and the landlord won't put them right.' I know a farmer in Sussex who, having a seven-years' lease of some downland, at his own expense built a small tank which cost him £30. He told me at the end of his lease the farm would be worth £30 per annum more, because of the tank. The Earl of Chichester, who has most wisely and successfully grappled with the subject, says that £100 per annum is not an unfrequent expenditure by individual farmers for the carting of water in summer-time.

"In my next I will give, by his lordship's kind permission, a detailed account and plan of his admirable method of water supply, superseding wells and pumping."

LETTER LXXXVI

LET US (ALL) EAT AND DRINK

February, 1878.

IN assuming that the English Bible may yet be made the rule of faith and conduct to the English people; and in placing in the Sheffield Library, for its first volume, a MS. of that Bible in its perfect form, much more is of course accepted as the basis of our future education than the reader will find taken for the ground either of argument or appeal, in any of my writings on political economy previous to the year 1875. It may partly account for the want of success of those writings, that they pleaded for honesty without praise, and for charity without reward;—that they entirely rejected, as any motive of moral action, the fear of future judgment; and—taking St. Paul in his irony at his bitterest word,—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,"—they merely expanded that worldly resolution into its just terms: "Yes, let us eat and drink"—what else?—but let us *all* eat and drink, and not a few only, enjoining fast to the rest.

Nor do I, in the least item, now retract the

assertion, so often made in my former works,* that human probity and virtue are indeed entirely independent of any hope in futurity; and that it is precisely in accepting death as the end of all, and in laying down, on that sorrowful condition, his life for his friends, that the hero and patriot of all time has become the glory and safety of his country. The highest ideals of manhood given for types of conduct in 'Unto this Last;' and the assertions that the merchant and common labourer must be ready, in the discharge of their duty, to die rather than fail, assume nothing more than this; and all the proper laws of human society may be perfectly developed and obeyed, and must be so wherever such society is constituted with prudence, though none of them be sanctioned by any other Divinity than that of our own souls, nor their violation punished by any other penalty than perfect death. There is no reason that we should drink foul water in London, because we never hope to drink of the stream of the City of God; nor that we should spend most of our income in making machines for the slaughter of innocent nations, because we never expect to gather the leaves of the tree for their healing.

Without, therefore, ceasing to press the works of prudence even on Infidelity, and expect deeds and thoughts of honour even from Mortality, I yet take henceforward happier, if not nobler, ground of

* Most carefully wrought out in the preface to the 'Crown of Wild Olive.'

appeal, and write as a Christian to Christians; that is to say, to persons who rejoice in the hope of a literal, personal, perpetual life, with a literal, personal, and eternal God.

To all readers holding such faith, I now appeal, urging them to confess Christ before men; which they will find, on self-examination, they are most of them afraid to do.

For going to church is only a compliance with the fashion of the day; not in the least a confession of Christ, but only the expression of a desire to be thought as respectable as other people. Staying to sacrament is usually not much more; though it *may* become superstitious, and a mere service done to obtain dispensation from other services. Violent combativeness for particular sects, as Evangelical, Roman Catholic, High Church, Broad Church—or the like, is merely a form of party egotism, and a defiance of Christ, not confession of Him.

But to confess Christ is, first, to behave righteously, truthfully, and continently; and then, to separate ourselves from those who are manifestly or by profession rogues, liars, and fornicators. Which it is terribly difficult to do; and which the Christian church has at present entirely ceased to attempt doing.

And, accordingly, beside me, as I write, to-day, (shortest day, 1877,) lies the (on the whole) honestest journal of London,—*Punch*,—with a moral piece of Christian art occupying two of its

pages, representing the Turk in a human form, as a wounded and all but dying victim—surrounded by the Christian nations, under the forms of bear and vultures.

"This witness is true" as against themselves, namely, that hitherto the action of the Christian nation to the infidel has always been one of rapine, in the broad sense. The Turk *is* what he is because we—have been only Christians in name. And another witness is true, which is a very curious one; never, so far as I know, yet received from past history.

Wherever the Christian church, or any section of it, has indeed resolved to live a Christian life, and keep God's laws in God's name,—there, instantly, manifest approval of Heaven is given by accession of *worldly prosperity* and victory. This witness has only been unheard, because every sect of Christians refuses to believe that the religion of any other sect can be sincere, or accepted of Heaven: while the truth is that it does not matter a burnt stick's end from the altar, in Heaven's sight, whether you are Catholic or Protestant, Eastern, Western, Byzantine, or Norman, but only whether you are true. So that the moment Venice is true to St. Mark, her flag flies over all the Eastern islands; and the moment Florence is true to the Lady of Lilies, her flag flies over all the Apennines; and the moment Switzerland is true to Notre Dame des Neiges, her pine-club beats down the Austrian lances; and the moment England is true to her Protestant virtue, all

the sea-winds ally themselves with her against the Armada: and though after-shame and infidel failure follow upon every nation, yet the glory of their great religious day remains unsullied, and in that, they live for ever.

This is the Temporal lesson of all history, and with that there is another Spiritual lesson,—namely, that in the ages of faith, conditions of prophecy and seer-ship exist, among the faithful nations, in painting and scripture, which are also immortal and divine;—of which it has been my own special mission to speak for the most part of my life: but only of late I have understood completely the meaning of what had been taught me,—in beginning to learn somewhat more, of which I must not speak to-day; Fors appointing that I should rather say final word respecting our present state of spiritual fellowship, exemplified in the strikes of our workmen, the misery that accompanies them, and the articles of our current literature thereupon.

The said current literature, on this subject, being almost entirely under the command of the Masters, has consisted chiefly in lectures on the guilt and folly of strikes, without in any wise addressing itself to point out to the men any other way of settling the question. "You can't have three shillings a day in such times; but we will give you two and sixpence: you had better take it—and, both on religious and commercial grounds, make no fuss. How much better is two and

sixpence than nothing! and if once the mill stop —think—where shall we be all then?" "Yes," the men answer, "but if to-day we take two and sixpence, what is to hinder you, to-morrow, from observing to us that two shillings are better than nothing, and we had better take *that* sum on religious and commercial principles, without fuss? And the day after, may not the same pious and moral instructors recommend to us the contented acceptance of eighteenpence? A stand must clearly be made somewhere, and we choose to make it here, and now."

The masters again have reason to rejoin: "True, but if we give you three shillings to-day, how are we to know you will not stand for three and sixpence to-morrow, and for four shillings next week? A stand must be made somewhere, and we choose to make it here, and now."

What solution is there, then? and of what use are any quantity of homilies either to man or master, on their manner of debate, that show them no possible solution in another way? As things are at present, the quarrel can only be practically closed by imminence of starvation on one side, or of bankruptcy on the other: even so, closed only for a moment,—never ended, burning presently forth again, to sink silent only in death;—while, year after year, the agonies of conflict and truces of exhaustion produce, for reward of the total labour, and fiat of the total council of the people, the minimum of gain for the maximum of misery.

Scattered up and down, through every page I have written on political economy for the last twenty years, the reader will find unfailing reference to a principle of solution in such dispute, which is rarely so much as named by other arbitrators;—or if named, never believed in: yet, this being indeed the only principle of decision, the conscience of it, however repressed, stealthily modifies every arbitrative word.

The men are rebuked, in the magistral homilies, for their ingratitude in striking! Then there must be a law of *Grace*, which at least the masters recognize. The men are mocked in the magistral homilies for their folly in striking. Then there must be a law of *Wisdom*, which at least the masters recognize.

Appeal to *these*, then, for their entire verdict, most virtuous masters, all-gracious and all-wise. These reprobate ones, graceless and senseless, cannot find their way for themselves; you must guide them. That much I told you, years and years ago. You will have to do it, in spite of all your liberty-mongers. Masters, in fact, you must be; not in name.

But, as yet blind: and drivers—not leaders—of the blind, you must pull the beams out of your own eyes, now; and that bravely. Preach your homily to yourselves first. Let me hear once more how it runs, to the men. "Oh foolish and ungrateful ones," you say, "did we not once on a time give you high wages—even so high that you contentedly

drank yourselves to death; and now, oh foolish and forgetful ones, that the time has come for us to give you low wages, will you not contentedly also starve yourselves to death?"

Alas, wolf-shepherds—this is St. George's word to you:—

"In your prosperity you gave these men high wages, not in any kindness to *them*, but in contention for business among yourselves. You allowed the men to spend their wage in drunkenness, and you boasted of that drunkenness by the mouth of your Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in the columns of your leading journal, as a principal sign of the country's prosperity. You have declared again and again, by vociferation of all your orators, that you have wealth so overflowing that you do not know what to do with it. These men who dug the wealth for you, now lie starving at the mouths of the hell-pits you made them dig; yea, their bones lie scattered at the grave's mouth, like as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth. Your boasted wealth—where is it? Is the war between these and you, because you now mercilessly refuse them food, or because all your boasts of wealth were lies, and you have none to give?

"Your boasts of wealth *were* lies. You were working from hand to mouth in your best times; now your work is stopped, and you have nothing in the country to pay for food with; still less any store of food laid by. And how much distress and wrath you will have to bear before you learn the lesson of

justice, God only knows. But this is the lesson you *have* to learn."

Every workman in any craft * must pass his examination, (crucial, not competitive,) when he comes of age, and be then registered as capable of his profession; those who cannot pass in the higher crafts being remitted to the lower, until they find their level. Then every registered workman must be employed where his work is needed—(You interrupt me to say that his work is needed nowhere? Then, what do you want with machinery, if already you have more hands than enough, to do everything that needs to be done?)—by direction of the guild he belongs to, and paid by that guild his appointed wages, constant and unalterable by any chance or phenomenon whatsoever. His wages must be given him day by day, from the hour of his entering the guild, to the hour of his death, never raised, nor lowered, nor interrupted; admitting, therefore, no temptation by covetousness, no wringing of anxiety, no doubt or fear of the future.

That is the literal fulfilment of what we are to pray for—"Give us each day—our daily *bread*," observe—not our daily money. For, that wages

* Ultimately, as often before stated, every male child born in England must learn some manner of skilled work by which he may earn his bread. If afterwards his fellow-workers choose that he shall sing, or make speeches to them instead, and that they will give him his turnip a day, or somewhat more, for Parliamentary advice, at their pleasure be it. I heard on the 7th of January this year that many of the men in Wales were reduced to that literal nourishment. Compare Fors, vol. i. p. 212.

may be constant they must be in kind, not in money. So much bread, so much woollen cloth, or so much fuel, as the workman chooses; or, in lieu of these, *if* he choose, the order for such quantity at the government stores; order to be engraved, as he chooses, on gold, or silver, or paper: but the "penny" a day to be always and everywhere convertible, on the instant, into its known measure of bread, cloth, or fuel, and to be the standard, therefore, eternal and invariable, of all value of things, and wealth of men. That is the lesson you have to learn from St. George's lips, inevitably, against any quantity of shriek, whine, or sneer, from the swindler, the adulterator, and the fool. Whether St. George will let me teach it you before I die, is his business, not mine; but as surely as *I* shall die, these words of his shall *not*.

And "to-day" (which is my own shield motto) I send to a London goldsmith, whose address was written for me (so Fors appointed it) by the Prince Leopold, with his own hand,—the weight of pure gold which I mean to be our golden standard, (defined by Fors, as I will explain in another place,) to be beaten to the diameter of our old English "Angel," and to bear the image and superscriptions above told, (Fors, vol. iii. p. 182).

And now, in due relation to this purpose of fixing the standard of bread, we continue our inquiry into the second part of the Deacon's service—in not only breaking bread, but also pouring wine, from house to house; that so making all food one sacrament, all

Christian men may eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people, their Lord adding to their assembly daily such as shall be saved.

Read first this piece of a friend's recent letter:—

"My dear Mr. Ruskin,—In reading over again the December 'Fors,' I have been struck with your question quoted, 'They have no wine?' and the command is 'Fill the water-pots with water.' I am greatly averse to what is called improving, spiritualizing—*i.e.*, applying the sacred text in a manner other than the simple and literal one; but Christ's words had doubtless in them a germ of thoughtful wisdom applicable to other aims and ends besides the original circumstances: and it is a singular coincidence that Fors should have induced you to close your last year with your quotation from the Cana miracle, and that the next number should propose to deal with 'filling the water-pots (*ὑδρίαι*) with water.' One thing is certain, viz., that in many parts of the world, and even in England in summer, the human obedience to the command precedent to the miracle would be impossible. Did you ever read Kingsley's Sermon on Cana? If you think it well to give a few of the extracts of him 'who being dead yet speaketh,' I shall be delighted to make them, and send them;* they are different from what one hears in ordinary churches, and are *vital* for St. George."

"It is, I think in the first place, an important, as well as a pleasant thing, to know that the Lord's glory, as St. John says, was first shown forth at a wedding,—at a

* From 'Sermons on National Subjects.' Parker and Son. 1860.

feast. Not by helping some great philosopher to think more deeply, or some great saint to perform more wonderful acts of holiness; but in giving the simple pleasure of wine to simple, commonplace people of whom we neither read that they were rich, nor righteous.

"Though no one else cares for the poor, He cares for them. With their hearts He begins His work, even as He did in England sixty years ago, by the preaching of Whitfield and Wesley. Do you wish to know if anything is the Lord's work? See if it is a work among the poor.

"But again, the Lord is a giver, and not a taskmaster. He does not demand from us: He gives to us. He had been giving from the foundation of the world. Corn and wine, rain and sunshine, and fruitful seasons had been His sending. And now He has come to show it. He has come to show men who it was who had been filling their heart with joy and gladness, who had been bringing out of the earth and air, by His unseen chemistry, the wine which maketh glad the heart of man.

"In every grape that hangs upon the vine, water is changed into wine, as the sap ripens into rich juice. He had been doing that all along, in every vineyard and orchard; and that was His glory. Now He was come to prove that; to draw back the veil of custom and carnal sense, and manifest Himself. Men had seen the grapes ripen on the tree; and they were tempted to say, as every one of us is tempted now, 'It is the sun, and the air, the nature of the vine and the nature of the climate, which make the wine.' Jesus comes and answers, 'Not so; I make the wine; I have been making it all along. The vines, the sun, the weather, are only my tools, wherewith I worked, turning rain and sap into wine: and I am greater than they. I made

them; I do not depend on them: I can make wine from water without vines, or sunshine. Behold, and drink, and see my glory *without* the vineyard, since you had forgotten how to see it *in* the vineyard!'

"We, as well as they, are in danger of forgetting who it is that sends us corn and wine, and fruitful seasons, love, and marriage, and all the blessings of this life.

"We are now continually fancying that these outward earthly things, as we call them, in our shallow carnal conceits, have nothing to do with Jesus or His kingdom, but that we may compete, and scrape, even cheat, and lie, to get *them*,* and when we have them, misuse them selfishly, as if they belonged to no one but ourselves, as if we had no duty to perform about them, as if we owed God no service for them.

"And again, we are in danger of spiritual pride; in danger of fancying that because we are religious, and have, or fancy we have, deep experiences, and beautiful thoughts about God and Christ, and our own souls: therefore we can afford to despise those who do not know as much as ourselves: to despise the common pleasures and petty sorrows of poor creatures, whose souls and bodies are grovelling in the dust, busied with the cares of this world, at their wits' end to get their daily bread; to despise the merriment of young people, the play of children, and all those everyday happinesses which, though we may turn from them with a sneer, are precious in the sight of Him who made heaven and earth.

"All such proud thoughts—all such contempt of those who do not seem as spiritual as we fancy ourselves—is evil.

* Italics mine. The whole sentence might well have them; it is supremely important.

"See, in the epistle for the second Sunday after the Epiphany, St. Paul makes no distinction between rich and poor. This epistle is joined with the gospel of that day to show us what ought to be the conduct of Christians who believe in the miracle of Cana; what men should do who believe that they have a Lord in heaven, by whose command suns shine, fruits ripen, men enjoy the blessings of harvest, of marriage, of the comforts which the heathen and the savage, as well as the Christian, man partake.

"My friends, these commands are not to one class, but to all. Poor as well as rich may minister to others with earnestness, and condescend to those of low estate. Not a word in this whole epistle which does not apply equally to every rank, and sex, and age. Neither are these commands to each of us by ourselves, but to all of us together, as members of a family. If you will look through them, they are not things to be done to ourselves, but to our neighbours; not experiences to be felt about our own souls, but rules of conduct to our fellow-men. They are all different branches and flowers from that one root, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

"Do we live thus, rich and poor? Can we look each other in the face this afternoon and say, each man to his neighbour, 'I have behaved like a brother to you. I have rejoiced at your good fortune, and grieved at your sorrow. I have preferred you to myself'?"

Seldom shall you read more accurate or more noble words. How is it that clergymen who can speak thus, do not see the need of gathering together, into one '*little*' flock, those who will obey them?

I close our Fors this month with Mr. Willett's admirable prefatory remarks on water-distribution, and a few words of his from a private letter received at the same time; noting only farther a point or two of my own mountain experience. When *Punch* threw what ridicule he could * on my proposal to form field and glen reservoirs on the Apennines to stay the storm-waters; and, calculating ironically the quantity that fell per acre in an hour's storm, challenged me to stay it, he did not know that all had actually been done to the required extent by the engineers of three hundred years since, in the ravine above Agubbio, (the Agubbio of Dante's Oderigi,)—their rampart standing, from cliff to cliff, unshaken, to this day; and he as little foresaw that precisely what I had required to be done to give constancy of sweet waters to the storm-blanched ravines of Italy, I should be called on in a few years more to prevent the mob of England from doing, that they may take them away from the fair pastures of the valley of St. John.

The only real difficulty in managing the mountain waters is when one cannot get hold of them,—

* It is a grotesque example of the evil fortune which continually waits upon the best efforts for *essential* good made in this unlucky nineteenth century, that a journal usually so right in its judgment, and sympathetic in its temper, (I speak in entire seriousness,) and fearless besides in expressing both, (see, for instance, the splendid article on the Prince Christian's sport in the number for the 12th of this month,) should have taken the wrong side, and that merely for the sake of a jest, on the most important economical question in physics now at issue in the world!

when the limestones are so cavernous, or the sands so porous, that the surface drainage at once disappears, as on the marble flanks of hill above Lucca; but I am always amazed, myself, at the extreme docility of streams when they can be fairly caught and broken, like good horses, from their youth, and with a tender bridle-hand. I have been playing lately with a little one on my own rocks, — now as tame as Mrs. Buckland's leopard,* — and all I have to complain of in its behaviour is, that when I set it to undermine or clear away rubbish, it takes a month to do what I expected it to finish with a morning's work on a wet day; and even that, not without perpetual encouragement, approbation, and assistance.

On the other hand, to my extreme discomfiture, I have entirely failed in inveigling the water to come down at all, when it chooses to stay on the hill-side in places where I don't want it: but I suppose modern scientific drainage can accomplish this, though in my rough way I can do nothing but peel the piece of pertinacious bog right off the rock,—so beneficently faithful are the great Powers of the Moss, and the Earth, to their mountain duty of preserving, for man's comfort, the sources of the summer stream.

Now hear Mr. Willett.

"Three or four times every year the newspapers tell us of discomfort, suffering, disease, and death, caused by

* See *The World*, January 9th of this year.

floods. Every summer, unnecessary sums are expended by farmers and labourers for water carted from a distance, to supply daily needs of man and beast. Outbreaks of fever from drinking polluted and infected water are of daily occurrence, causing torture and bereavement to thousands.

All these evils are traceable mainly to our wicked, wasteful, and ignorant *neglect*: all this while, money is idly accumulating in useless hoards: people able and willing to work are getting hungry for want of employment; and the wealth of agricultural produce of all kinds is greatly curtailed for want of a wise, systematic, and simple application of the *mutual law* of *supply and demand* * in the storage of *rain-water*.

I can only now briefly introduce the subject, which if you consider it of sufficient importance I will follow up in future letters.

While the flooding of the districts south of the Thames at London is mainly owing to the contraction of the channel by the embankment, thereby causing the flood-tide to form a sort of *bore*, or advancing tidal-wave, as in the Severn and Wye, the periodic winter floods near Oxford, and in all our upland valleys, are admittedly more frequent and more severe than formerly; and this *not* on account of the increased rainfall.† The causes are to be found rather in—

I. The destruction of woods, heaths, and moorlands.

* Somewhere, (I think in 'Munera Pulveris'), I illustrated the law of Supply and Demand in commerce, and the madness of leaving it to its natural consequences without interference, by the laws of drought and rain.

† On the Continent, however, there *has* been an increased rainfall in the plains, caused by the destruction of the woods on the mountains, and by the coldness of the summers, which cannot lift the clouds high enough to lay snow on the high summits.

II. The paving and improved road-making in cities and towns.

III. The surface drainage of arable and pasture lands.

IV. The draining of morasses and fens; and,

V. The straightening and embanking of rivers and water-courses.

All these operations have a tendency to *throw* the *rainfall* rapidly from higher to lower levels.

This wilful winter waste is followed by woeful summer want.

'The people perish for lack of knowledge.' The remedy is in our own hands.

Lord Beaconsfield once wisely said, 'Every cottage should have its porch, its oven, and its TANK.'

And every farm-house, farm-building, and every mansion, should have its reservoir; every village its series of reservoirs; and every town and city its multiplied series of reservoirs, at different levels, and for the separate storage of water for drinking, for washing, and for streets, and less important purposes.

I propose in my next to give more in detail the operations of the principles here hinted at, and to show from what has been done in a few isolated instances, what would follow from a wider and more general application of them."

[After the next number the regular monthly publication of Fors was stopped by the Author's illness, referred to in Letter LXXXVIII.; and no more of Mr. Willett's papers appeared.—ED.]

LETTER LXXXVII

THE SNOW MANGER

March, 1878.

By my promise that, in the text of this series of Fors, there shall be "no syllable of complaint, or of scorn," I pray the reader to understand that I in no wise intimate any change of feeling on my own part. I never felt more difficulty in my life than I do, at this instant, in not lamenting certain things with more than common lament, and in not speaking of certain people with more than common scorn.

Nor is it possible to fulfil these rightly warning functions of Fors without implying *some* measure of scorn. For instance, in the matter of choice of books, it is impossible to warn my scholars against a book, without implying a certain kind of contempt for it. For I never would warn them against any writer whom I had complete respect for,—however adverse to me, or my work. There are few stronger adversaries to St. George than Voltaire. But my scholars are welcome to read as much of Voltaire as they like. His voice is mighty among the ages. Whereas they are entirely forbidden Miss Martineau,

—not because she is an infidel, but because she is a vulgar and foolish one.*

Do not say, or think, I am breaking my word in asserting, once for all, with reference to example, this necessary principle. This very vow and law that I have set myself, *must* be honoured sometimes in the breach of it, so only that the transgression be visibly not wanton or incontinent. Nay, in this very instance it is because I am not speaking in *pure* contempt, but have lately been as much surprised by the beauty of a piece of Miss Martineau's writings, as I have been grieved by the deadly effect of her writings generally on the mind of one of my best pupils, who had read them without telling me, that I make her a definite example. In future, it will be ordinarily enough for me to say to my pupils privately that they are not to read such and such books; while, for general order to my Fors readers, they may be well content, it seems to me, with the list of the books I want them to read constantly, and with such casual recommendation as I may be able to give of current literature. For instance, there is a quite lovely little book just come out about Irish children, 'Castle Blair,'—(which, let me state at once, I have strong personal, though stronger impersonal, reasons for recommending, the

* I use the word vulgar, here, in its first sense of egoism, not of selfishness, but of not seeing one's own relations to the universe. Miss Martineau plans a book—afterwards popular—and goes to breakfast, "not knowing what a great thing had been done." So Mr. Buckle, dying, thinks only—he shall not finish *his* book. Not at all whether God will ever make up *His*.

writer being a very dear friend; and some Irish children, for many and many a year, much more than that). But the *im*personal reasons are—first, that the book is good and lovely, and true; having the best description of a noble child in it, (Winny,) that I ever read; and nearly the best description of the next best thing—a noble dog; and reason second is that, after Miss Edgeworth's 'Ormond' and 'Absentee,' this little book will give more true insight into the proper way of managing Irish people than any other I know.*

Wherewith I have some more serious recommendations to give; and the first shall be of this most beautiful passage of Miss Martineau, which is quoted from 'Deerbrook' in the review of her autobiography:—

"In the house of every wise parent, may then be seen an epitome of life—a sight whose consolation is needed at times, perhaps, by all. Which of the little children of a virtuous household can conceive of his entering into his parents' pursuits, or interfering with them? How sacred are the study and the office, the apparatus of a knowledge and a power which he can only venerate! Which of these little ones dreams of disturbing the course of his parents' thought or achievement? Which

* Also, I have had it long on my mind to name the 'Adventures of a Phaeton' as a very delightful and wise book of its kind; very full of pleasant play, and deep and pure feeling; much interpretation of some of the best points of German character; and, last and least, with pieces of description in it which I should be glad, selfishly, to think inferior to what the public praise in 'Modern Painters,'—I can only say, they seem to *me* quite as good.

of them conceives of the daily routine of the household —its going forth and coming in, its rising and its rest— having been different before its birth, or that it would be altered by his absence? It is even a matter of surprise to him when it now and then occurs to him that there is anything set apart for him—that he has clothes and couch, and that his mother thinks and cares for him. If he lags behind in a walk, or finds himself alone among the trees, he does not dream of being missed; but home rises up before him as he has always seen it—his father thoughtful, his mother occupied, and the rest gay, with the one difference of *his** not being there. This he believes, and has no other trust than in his shriek of terror, for being ever remembered more. Yet, all the while, from day to day, from year to year, without one moment's intermission, is the providence of his parent around him, brooding over the workings of his infant spirit, chastening its passions, nourishing its affections—now *troubling it with salutary pain*, now *animating it with even more wholesome delight.* All the while, is the order of the household affairs regulated for the comfort and profit of these lowly little ones, though they regard it reverently, because they cannot comprehend it. They may not know of all this—how their guardian bends over their pillow nightly, and lets no word of their careless talk drop unheeded, and records every sob of infant grief, hails every brightening gleam of reason and every chirp of childish glee—they may not know this, because they could not understand it aright, and each little heart would be inflated with pride, each little mind would lose the grace and purity of its unconsciousness; but the guardianship is not the

* Italics mine.

less real, constant, and tender for its being unrecognized by its objects."

This passage is of especial value to me just now, because I have presently to speak about faith, and its power; and I have never myself thought of the innocent *faithlessness* of children, but only of their faith. The idea given here by Miss Martineau is entirely new to me, and most beautiful. And had she gone on thus, expressing her own feelings modestly, she would have been a most noble person, and a verily 'great' writer. She became a vulgar person, and a little writer, in her conceit;—of which I can say no more, else I should break my vow unnecessarily.

And by way of atonement for even this involuntary disobedience to it, I have to express great shame for some words spoken, in one of the letters of the first series, in total misunderstanding of Mr. Gladstone's character.

I know so little of public life, and see so little of the men who are engaged in it, that it has become impossible for me to understand their conduct or speech, as it is reported in journals.

There are reserves, references, difficulties, limits, excitements, in all their words and ways, which are inscrutable to me; and at this moment I am unable to say a word about the personal conduct of any one, respecting the Turkish or any other national question,—remaining myself perfectly clear as to what was always needed, and still needs, to be

done, but utterly unable to conceive *why* people talk, or do, or do not, as hitherto they have spoken, done, and left undone. But as to the actual need, it is now nearly two years since Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Froude, and several other men of 'creditable' (shall we say?) name, gathered together at call of Mr. Gladstone, as for a great national need, together with a few other men of more retired and studious mind, Edward Burne Jones for one, and myself for another, did then plainly and to the best of their faculty tell the English nation what it had to do.

The people of England answered, by the mouths of their journals, that Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Froude knew nothing of history, that Mr. Gladstone was a dishonest leader of a party, and that the rest of us were insignificant, or insane, persons.

Whereupon the significant and sagacious persons, guiding the opinions of the public, through its press, set themselves diligently to that solemn task.

And I will take some pains to calculate for you, my now doubtless well-informed and soundly purposed readers, what expenditure of type there has been on your education, guidance, and exhortation by those significant persons, in these last two years.

I am getting into that Cathedra Pestilentiæ again! —My good reader, I mean, truly and simply, that I hope to get, for next month, some approximate measure of the space in heaven which would be occupied by the unfolded tissue or web of all the

columns of the British newspapers which have during these last two years discussed, in your pay, the Turkish question. All that counsel, you observe, you have bought with a price. Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Froude gave you theirs gratis, as all the best things are given; I put nearly a prohibitory tax upon mine, that you might not merely travel with your boots on it; but here was an article of counsel made up for your consumption at *market* price. You have paid for it, I can tell you *that*, approximately, just now, one million nine hundred and four thousand nine hundred and eighteen pounds. You have voted also in your beautiful modern manner, and daily directed your governors what they were to do for British interests and honour. And your result is——well, you shall tell me your opinions of that next month; but—whatever your opinions may be—here IS the result for you, in words which are not of the newest, certainly, and yet are in a most accurate sense "This Evening's News."

"Quare fremuerunt Gentes, et Populi meditati sunt inania.

"Astiterunt Reges terræ, et Principes convenerunt in unum, adversus Dominum et adversus Christum ejus.

"Disrumpamus vincula eorum, et projiciamus a nobis jugum ipsorum.

"Qui habitat in celis irridebit eos, et Dominus subsannabit eos.

"Tunc loquetur ad eos jn ira sua, et in furore suo conturbabit eos."

If you can read that bit of David and St. Jerome, as it stands, so be it. If not, this translation is closer than the one you, I suppose, *don't* know:—

"Why have the nations foamed as the sea; and the people meditated emptiness?

"The Kings of the earth stood, and the First Ministers met together in conference, against the Lord, and against His Christ.

"Let us break, they said, the chains of the Lord and Christ. Let us cast away from us the yoke of the Lord and Christ.

"He that inhabits heaven shall laugh at them, and the Lord shall mock them.

"Then shall He speak to them in His anger, and torment them with His strength."

There are one or two of the points of difference in this version which I wish you to note. Our 'why do the heathen rage' is unintelligible to us, because we don't think of *ourselves* as 'heathen' usually. But we are; and the nations spoken of are—the British public,—and the All-publics of our day, and of all days.

Nor is the word 'rage' the right one, in the least. It means to "fret idly," like useless sea,—incapable of *real* rage, or of *any* sense,—foaming out only its own shame. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire

and dirt;"—and even just now—the purest and best of public men spitting out emptiness only and mischief. "Fluctibus et *fremitu* assurgens, *Benace*, MARINO." In the Septuagint, the word is to neigh like a horse—("They were as fed horses in the morning; every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.")

Then, I have put the full words 'of the Lord and Christ' in the third verse, instead of 'their,' because else people don't see who 'they' are.

And in the fourth verse, observe that the 'anger' of the Lord is the *mind* in which He speaks to the kings; but His 'fury' is the *practical* stress of the thunder of His power, and of the hail and death with which He 'troubles' them and torments. Read *this* piece of evening's news, for instance. It is one of thousands such. That is what is meant by "He shall vex them in His sore displeasure," which words you have chanted to your pipes and bellows so sweetly and so long,—'His so-o-o-ore dis-plea-a-sure.'

But here is the *thing*, nearly at your doors, reckoning by railway distance. "The mother got impatient, thrust the child into the snow, and hurried on—not looking back."

But *you* are not 'vexed,' you say? No,—perhaps that is because you are so very good. And perhaps the muffins will be as cold as the snow, too, soon, if you don't eat them. Yet if, after breakfast, you look out of window westward, you may see some "vexation" even in England and Wales, of which

more, presently, and if you read this second Psalm again, and make some effort to understand it, it may be provisionally useful to you,—provisionally on your recognizing that there is a God at all, and that it is a *Lord* that *reigneth*, and not merely a *Law* that reigneth, according to the latter-day divinity of the Duke of Argyll and Mr. George Dawson. Have patience with me. I'm not speaking as I didn't mean to. I want you to read, and attentively, some things that the Duke of Argyll and Mr. Dawson have said; but you must have the caterpillar washed out of the cabbage, first.

I want you to read,—ever so many things. First of all, and nothing else till you have well mastered that, the history of Montenegro given by Mr. Gladstone in the *Nineteenth Century* for May 1877, p. 360. After that, 'Some Current Fallacies about Turks,' etc., by the Rev. Malcolm MacColl, *Nineteenth Century*, December 1877, p. 831. After that, the Duke of Argyll's 'Morality in Politics.' And after that, the obituary of 'George Dawson, Politician, Lecturer, and Preacher,' by the Rev. R. W. Dale, *Nineteenth Century*, August 1877, p. 44.

It is an entirely kind and earnest review of one of the chief enemies of Evangelicalism, by an Evangelical clergyman. The closing passages of it (pp. 59 to 61) are entirely beautiful and wise,—the last sentence, let me thankfully place for an abiding comfort and power in St. George's Schools.

"To despise the creeds in which the noblest intellects of Christendom in past times found rest, is presumptuous folly; to suppose that these creeds are a final and exact statement of all that the Church can ever know, is to forget that in every creed there are two elements,—the divine substance, and the human form. The form must change with the changing thoughts of men; and even the substance may come to shine with clearer light, and to reveal unsuspected glories, as God and man come nearer together."

And the whole of the piece of biography thus nobly closed is full of instruction; but, in the course of it, there is a statement (pp. 49–51) respecting which I have somewhat contradictory to say, and that very gravely. I am sorry to leave out any of the piece I refer to: but those of my readers who have not access to the book, will find the gist of what I must contradict, qualifiedly, in these following fragments.

A. "The strength of his (George Dawson's) moral teaching was largely derived from the firmness of his own conviction that the laws which govern human life are not to be evaded; that they assert their authority with relentless severity; that it is of no use to try to cheat them; that they have no pity; that we must obey them, or else suffer the consequences of our disobedience. He insisted, with a frequency, an earnestness, and an energy which showed the depth of his own sense of the importance of this part of his teaching, that what a man sows he must also reap,—no matter though he has sown ignorantly or carelessly;

that the facts of the physical and moral universe have a stern reality; and that, if we refuse to learn and to recognize the facts, the best intentions are unavailing. The iron girder must be strong enough to bear the weight that is put upon it, or else it will give way,—no matter whether the girder is meant to support the roof of a railway station, or the floor of a church, or the gallery of a theatre. Hard work is necessary for success in business; and the man who works hardest —other things being equal—is most likely to succeed, whether he is a saint or a sinner."

B. "The facts of the universe are steadfast, and not to be changed by human fancies or follies; the laws of the universe are relentless, and will not relax in the presence of human weakness, or give way under the pressure of human passion and force."

C. "No matter though you have a most devout and conscientious belief that by mere praying you can save a town from typhoid fever; if the drainage is bad and the water foul, praying will never save the town from typhoid."

Thus far, Mr. Dale has been stating the substance of Mr. Dawson's teaching; he now, as accepting that substance, so far as it reaches, himself proceeds to carry it farther, and to apply the same truths — admitting them to be truths — to spiritual things. And now, from *him* we have this following most important and noble passage, which I accept for wholly true, and place in St. George's schools.

D. "It would be strange if these truths became false as soon as they are applied to the religious side

of the life of man. The spiritual universe is no more to be made out of a man's own head, than the material universe or the moral universe. *There*, too, the conditions of human life are fixed. *There*, too, we have to respect the facts; and, whether we respect them or not, the facts remain. *There*, too, we have to confess the authority of the actual laws; and, whether we confess it or not, we shall suffer for breaking them. To suppose that, in relation to the spiritual universe, it is safe or right to believe what we think it pleasant to believe,—to suppose that, because we think it is eminently desirable that the spiritual universe should be ordered in a particular way, therefore we are at liberty to act as though this were certainly the way in which it is ordered, and that, though we happen to be wrong, it will make no difference,—is preposterous. No; water drowns, fire burns, whether we believe it or not. No belief of ours will change the facts, or reverse the laws of the spiritual universe. It is our first business to discover the laws, and to learn how the facts stand."

I accept this passage—observe, totally, -but I accept it for itself. The basis of it—the preceding Dawsonian statements, A, B, and C,—I wholly deny, so far as I am a Christian. If the Word of Christ be true, the facts of the physical universe are *not* steadfast. They are steadfast only for the infidel. But these signs shall evermore follow them that believe. "They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them." No matter how bad the drainage of the town, how foul the water, "He shall deliver thee

from the noisome pestilence; and though a thousand fall at thy right hand, it shall not come nigh *thee*." This, as a Christian, I am bound to believe. This, speaking as a Christian, I am bound to proclaim, whatever the consequences may be to the town, or the opinion of me formed by the Common Council; as a Christian, I believe prayer to be, in the last sense, sufficient for the salvation of the town; and drainage, in the last sense, insufficient for its salvation. Not that you will find me, looking back through the pages of Fors, unconcerned about drainage. But if, of the two, I must choose between drains and prayer—why, "look you"—whatever you may think of my wild and whirling words, I will go pray.

And now, therefore, for St. George's schools, I most solemnly reverse the statement B, and tell my scholars, with all the force that is in me, that the facts of the universe are NOT steadfast, that they ARE changed by human fancies, and by human follies (much more by human wisdoms),—that the laws of the universe are no more relentless than the God who wrote them,—that they WILL relax in the presence of human weakness, and DO give way under the pressure of human passion and force, and give way so totally, before so little passion and force, that if you have but 'faith' as a grain of mustard seed, *nothing* shall be impossible unto you.

"Are these merely fine phrases, or is he mad, as people say?" one of my polite readers asks of another.

Neither, oh polite and pitying friend. Observe, in the first place, that I simply speak *as* a Christian, and express to you accurately what Christian doctrine is. I am myself so nearly, as you are so grievously, faithless to less than the least grain of —Colman's—mustard, that *I* can take up no serpents, and raise no dead.

But I don't say, therefore, that the dead are not raised, nor that Christ is not risen, nor the head of the serpent bowed under the foot of the Seed of the Woman. I say only,—*if* my faith is vain, it is because I am yet in my sins. And to others I say —what Christ bids me say. That, simply,—that, literally,—that, positively; and no more. "If thou wilt believe, thou shalt see the salvation of God."

If thou *wilt* (wouldest)—Faith being essentially a matter of will, after some other conditions are met. For how shall they believe on whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher? Yea; but—asks St. George, murmuring behind his visor,—much more, how shall they hear without—ears.

He that *hath* ears, (it is written)—let him hear; —but how of him that hath none?

For observe, far the greater multitude of men *cannot* hear of Christ at all. You can't tell an unloving person, what love is, preach you till his doomsday. What is to become of them, God knows, who is their Judge; but since they cannot hear of Christ, they cannot believe in Him, and for them, the Laws of the Universe are unchangeable enough.

But for those who *can* hear—comes the farther question whether they *will*. And then, if they do, whether they will be steadfast in the faith, steadfast behind the shield, point in earth, cross of iron—(compare 'Laws of Fésole,' chapter iii., add the old heraldic word 'restrial,' of bearings, first written in blood,)—else, having begun in the spirit, they may only be "made perfect in the flesh." (Gal. iii. 3.) But if, having begun in the Spirit, they grieve it not, there will be assuredly among them the chorus-leader. He that "leads forth the choir of the Spirit," and worketh MIRACLES among you. (Gal. iii. 5.)

Now, lastly, read in the ninth chapter of Froude's History of England, the passage beginning, "Here, therefore, we are to enter upon one of the grand scenes of history,"* down to, "He desired us each to choose our confessor, and to confess our sins one to another;" and the rest, I give here, for end of this Fors:—

"The day after, he preached a sermon in the chapel on the 59th Psalm: 'O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast destroyed us;' concluding with the words, 'It is better that we should suffer here a short penance for our faults, than be reserved for the eternal pains of hell hereafter;'—and so ending, he turned to us, and bade us all do as we saw him do. Then rising from his place he went direct to the eldest of the brethren, who was sitting nearest to himself, and kneeling before him, begged his forgiveness for any offence which in heart,

* Octavo edition of 1858, vol. ii., p. 341.

word, or deed he might have committed against him. Thence he proceeded to the next, and said the same; and so to the next, through us all, we following him, and saying as he did,—each from each imploring pardon.

"Thus, with unobtrusive nobleness, did these poor men prepare themselves for the end: not less beautiful in their resolution, not less deserving the everlasting remembrance of mankind, than those three hundred who in the summer morning sate combing their golden hair in the passes of Thermopylæ. We will not regret their cause; there is no cause for which any man can more nobly suffer than to witness that it is better for him to die than to speak words which he does not mean. Nor, in this their hour of trial, were they left without higher comfort.

"'The third day after,' the story goes on, 'was the mass of the Holy Ghost, and God made known His presence among us. For when the host was lifted up, there came as it were a whisper of air, which breathed upon our faces as we knelt. Some perceived it with the bodily senses; all felt it as it thrilled into their hearts. And then followed a sweet, soft sound of music, at which our venerable father was so moved, God being thus abundantly manifest among us, that he sank down in tears, and for a long time could not continue the service—we all remaining stupefied, hearing the melody, and feeling the marvellous effects of it upon our spirits, but knowing neither whence it came nor whither it went. Only our hearts rejoiced as we perceived that God was with us indeed.'"

It can't be the end of this Fors, however, I find, (15th February, half-past seven morning,) for I have forgotten twenty things I meant to say; and

this instant, in my morning's reading, opened and read, being in a dreamy state, and not knowing well what I was doing,—of all things to find a new message !—in the first chapter of Proverbs.

I was in a dreamy state, because I had got a letter about the Thirlmere debate, which was to me, in my purposed quietness, like one of the voices on the hill behind the Princess Parizade. And *she* could not hold, without cotton in her ears, dear wise sweet thing. But luckily for me, I have just had help from the Beata Vigri at Venice, who sent me her own picture and St. Catherine's, yesterday, for a Valentine; and so I *can* hold on:—only just read this first of Proverbs with me, please.

"The Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel.

"To *know* wisdom and instruction."

(Not to 'opine' them.)

"To *perceive* the words of understanding."

(He that hath eyes, let him read—he that hath ears, hear. And for the Blind and the Deaf,—if patient and silent by the right road-side,—there may also be some one to say 'He is coming.')

"To receive the instruction of WISDOM, JUSTICE, and JUDGMENT, and EQUITY."

Four things,—oh friends,—which you have not only to *per*ceive, but to *re*ceive. And the species of these four things, and the origin of their species,—you know them, doubtless, well,—in these scientific days ?

"To give subtlety to the simple; to the *young* man, knowledge and discretion."

(Did ever one hear, lately, of a young man's wanting either? Or of a simple person who wished to be subtle? Are not we all subtle—even to the total defeat of our hated antagonists, the Prooshians and Rooshians?)

"A wise man will hear and will increase learning."

(*e.g.* "A stormy meeting took place in the Birmingham Town Hall last night. It was convened by the Conservative Association for the purpose of passing a vote of confidence in the Government; but the Liberal Association also issued placards calling upon Liberals to attend. The chair was taken by Mr. Stone, the President of the Conservative Association, but the greater part of his speech was inaudible even upon the platform, owing to the frequent bursts of applause, groans, and Kentish fire, intermingled with comic songs. Flags bearing the words 'Vote for Bright' and 'Vote for Gladstone' were hoisted, and were torn to pieces by the supporters of the Government. Dr. Sebastian Evans moved, and Alderman Brinsley seconded, a resolution expressing confidence in Her Majesty's Government. Mr. J. S. Wright moved, and Mr. R. W. Dale seconded, an amendment, but neither speaker could make himself heard; and on the resolution being put to the meeting it was declared carried, but the Liberal speakers disputed the decision of the chairman, and asserted that two thirds of the meeting were against the resolution."—*Pall Mall Gazette*, February 13th, 1878.)

"And a man of understanding shall *attain unto* wise counsels."

(Yes, in due time; but oh me—over what burning marle, and by what sifting of wheat!)

"To understand a proverb, and the interpretation."

(Yes, truly—all this chapter I have known from my mother's knee—and never understood it till this very hour.)

"The words of the wise and their *dark* sayings."

(Behold this dreamer cometh,—and this is his dream.)

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

(*e.g.* "Herr ——, one of the Socialist leaders, declaring that he and his friends, since they do not fear earthly Powers, are not likely to be afraid of Powers of any other kind."—*Pall Mall Gazette*, same date.*)

"My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother."

The father is to teach the boy's reason; and the

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* I take this passage out of an important piece of intelligence of a quite contrary and greatly encouraging kind. "A new political party has just been added to the many parties which already existed in Germany. It calls itself 'the Christian Social party.' It is headed by several prominent Court preachers of Berlin, who, alarmed at the progress made by the Socialists, have taken this means of resisting their subversive doctrines. The object of the party is to convince the people that there can be no true system of government which is not based upon Christianity; and this principle is being elaborately set forth in large and enthusiastic meetings. Herr Most, one of the Socialist leaders, has given the political pastors an excellent text for their orations by declaring that he and his friends, since they do not fear earthly Powers, are not likely to be afraid of Powers of any other kind. Branches of the Christian Socialist party have been formed in several of the most important German towns; and they confidently expect to be able to secure a definite position in the next Imperial Parliament."

mother, his will. He is to take his father's word, and to obey his mother's—look, even to the death.

(Therefore it is that all laws of holy life are called 'mother-laws' in Venice.—Fors, 1877, page 32.)

"For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head."

Alas, yes!—once men were crowned in youth with the gold of their father's glory; when the hoary head was crowned also in the way of righteousness.

And so they went their way to prison, and to death.

But now, by divine liberty, and general indication, even Solomon's *own* head is not crowned by any means.—Fors, 1877, p. 102.

"And chains about thy neck"—(yes, collar of the knightliest. Let not thy mother's Mercy and Truth forsake thee) bind them about thy neck, write them upon the tables of thine heart. *She* may forget: yet will not *I* forget thee.

(Therefore they say—of the sweet mother-laws of their loving God and lowly Christ—'Disrumpamus *vincula* eorum et projiciamus a nobis, *jugum* ipsorum.')

Nay—nay, but if they say thus then?

"Let us swallow them up *alive*, as the grave."

(Other murderers kill, before they bury;—but YOU, you observe, are invited to bury before you kill. All these things, when once you know their meaning, have their physical symbol quite accurately beside them. Read the story of the last explosion in

Yorkshire—where a woman's husband and her seven sons fell—all seven—all eight—together: about the beginning of barley harvest it was, I think.)

"And *whole* as those that go down into the pit."

(Other murderers kill the body only, but YOU are invited to kill 'whole'—body and soul. Yea—and to kill with such wholeness that the creatures shall not even know they ever *had* a soul, any more than a frog of Egypt. You will not, think you. Ah, but hear yet—for second thoughts are best.)

"We shall find all precious substance. We shall fill our houses with spoil."

(ALL precious substance. Is there anything in those houses round the park that could possibly be suggested as wanting?—And *spoil*,—all taken from the killed people. Have they not sped—have they not divided the spoil—to every man a damsel or two. Not one bit of it all worked for with your own hand, —even so, mother of Sisera.)

"Cast in thy lot among *us*."—(The Company is limited.)

"Let us all have one"—(heart? no, for *none* of us have that;—mind? no, for none of us have that;—but let us all have one—) "purse." And now—that you know the meaning of it—I write to the end my morning's reading.

My son, walk not thou in the way with them.

Refrain thy foot from their path. For their feet *run* to evil, and *hasten* to shed blood.

Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.

And they lay wait for their *own* blood.

They lurk privily for their *own* lives.

SO ARE THE WAYS OF EVERY ONE THAT IS GREEDY OF GAIN WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE LIFE OF THE OWNERS THEREOF.

Now, therefore, let us see what these ways are —the Viæ Peccatorum,—the Pleasantness of them, and the Peace.

The following are portions of a letter from the brother of one of my country friends here, who has been pastor of the English Baptist Church in Tredegar about twenty years.

"TREDEGAR, 11*th February*, 1878.

"Some three hundred men are said to have been discharged from the works last week. The mills are to be closed all this week, and the iron workers do not expect to be able to earn a penny. About a day and a half per week, on the average, is what they have been working for several months. The average earnings have been six shillings a week, and out of that they have to pay for coal, house-rent, and other expenses, leaving very little for food and clothing. The place has been divided into districts. I have one of these districts to investigate and relieve. In that district there are a hundred and thirty families in distress, and which have been relieved on an average of two shillings per week for each family for the last month. Many of them are some days every week without anything to eat, and with nothing but water to drink: they have nothing but rags to cover them by day, and very little beside their wearing apparel to cover them on their beds at night. They have sold or pawned their furniture, and everything for which they

could obtain the smallest sum of money. In fact, they seem to me to be actually starving. In answer to our appeal, we have received about three hundred pounds, and have distributed the greater part of it. We also distributed a large quantity of clothing last week which we had received from different places. We feel increasing anxiety about the future. When we began, we hoped the prospect would soon brighten, and that we should be able before long to discontinue our efforts. Instead of that, however, things look darker than ever. We cannot tell what would become of us if contributions to our funds should now cease to come in, and we do not know how long we may hope that they will continue to come in, and really cannot tell who is to blame, nor what is the remedy."

They know not at *what* they stumble. How should they?

Well—will they hear at last then? Has Jael-Atropos at last driven her nail well down through the Helmet of Death he wore instead of the Helmet of Salvation—mother of Sisera?

Ὦ θνητοῖσι δικαιοτάτη, πολύολβε, ποθεινή,
ἐξ ἰσότητος ἀεὶ θνητοῖς χαίρουσα δικαίοις,
πάντιμ', ὀλβίομοιρε, Δικαιοσύνη μεγαλαυχής,
ἣ καθαραῖς γνώμαις αἰεὶ τὰ δέοντα βραβεύεις,
ἄθραυστος τὸ συνειδός· ἀεὶ θραύεις γὰρ ἅπαντας,
ὅσσοι μὴ τὸ σὸν ἦλθον ὑπὸ ζυγόν, ἀλλοπρόσαλλοι,
πλάστιγξιν βριαρῇσι παρεγκλίναντες ἀπλήστως·
ἀστασίαστε, φίλη πάντων, φιλόκωμ' ἐρατεινή,
εἰρήνῃ χαίρουσα, βίον ζηλοῦσα βέβαιον.
αἰεὶ γὰρ τὸ πλέον στυγέεις, ἰσότητι δὲ χαίρεις.
ἐν σοὶ γὰρ σοφίη ἀρετῆς τέλος ἐσθλὸν ἱκάνει.
κλῦθι, θεά, κακίην θνητῶν θραύουσα δικαίως,
ὡς ἂν ἰσορρόπίῃσιν ἀεὶ βίος ἐσθλὸς ὁδεύοι
θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων, οἳ ἀρούρης καρπὸν ἔδουσιν,
καὶ ζώων πάντων, ὁπόσ' ἐν κόλποισι τιθηνεῖ
γαῖα θεὰ μήτηρ καὶ πόντιος εἰνάλιος Ζεύς.

Thou who doest right for mortals,—full of blessings,—
thou, the desired of hearts,
Rejoicing, for thy equity, in mortal righteousness:—
All-honoured, happy-fated, majestic-miened Justice,
Who dost arbitrate, for pure minds, all that ought to be.
Unmoved of countenance thou:—(it is they who shall be moved
That come not under thy yoke,—other always to others,
Driving insatiably oblique the loaded scales.)
Thou,—seditionless, dear to all—lover of revel, and lovely,
Rejoicing in peace, zealous for sureness of life,
(For thou hatest always the More, and rejoicest in equalness.
For in thee the wisdom of virtue reaches its noble end.)
Hear, Goddess!—trouble thou justly the mischief of mortals,
So that always in fair equipoise the noble life may travel
Of mortal men that eat the fruit of the furrow,
And of all living creatures, whom nurse in their bosoms
Earth the Goddess mother, and the God of the deep sea.

ORPHEUS.—Sixty-third Hymn.

LETTER LXXXVIII

THE CONVENTS OF ST. QUENTIN

BRANTWOOD, *8th February*, 1880.

IT is now close on two years since I was struck by the illness which brought these Letters to an end, as a periodical series ; nor did I think, on first recovery, that I should ever be able to conclude them otherwise than by a few comments in arranging their topical index.

But my strength is now enough restored to permit me to add one or two more direct pieces of teaching to the broken statements of principle which it has become difficult to gather out of the mixed substance of the book.

To-day, being my sixty-first birthday, I would ask leave to say a few words to the friends who care for me, and the readers who are anxious about me, touching the above-named illness itself. For a physician's estimate of it, indeed, I can only refer them to my physicians. But there were some conditions of it which I knew better than they could: namely, first, the precise and sharp distinction between the state of morbid inflammation of brain which gave rise to false visions, (whether in sleep,

or trance, or waking, in broad daylight, with perfect knowledge of the real things in the room, while yet I saw others that were not there,) and the not morbid, however dangerous, states of more or less excited temper, and too much quickened thought, which gradually led up to the illness, accelerating in action during the eight or ten days preceding the actual giving way of the brain, (as may be enough seen in the fragmentary writing of the first edition of my notes on the Turner exhibition); and yet, up to the transitional moment of first hallucination, entirely healthy, and in the full sense of the word 'sane'; just as the natural inflammation about a healing wound in flesh is sane, up to the transitional edge where it may pass at a crisis into morbific, or even mortified, substance. And this more or less inflamed, yet still perfectly healthy, condition of mental power, may be traced by any watchful reader, in Fors, nearly from its beginning,—that manner of mental ignition or irritation being for the time a great additional force, enabling me to discern more clearly, and say more vividly, what for long years it had been in my heart to say.

Now I observed that in talking of the illness, whether during its access or decline, none of the doctors ever thought of thus distinguishing what was definitely diseased in the brain action, from what was simply curative—had there been time enough—of the wounded nature in me. And in the second place, not perceiving, or at least not admitting, this difference; nor, for the most part,

apprehending (except the one who really carried me through, and who never lost hope—Dr. Parsons of Hawkshead) that there *were* any mental wounds to be healed, they made, and still make, my friends more anxious about me than there is occasion for: which anxiety I partly regret, as it pains them; but much more if it makes them more doubtful than they used to be (which, for some, is saying a good deal) of the "truth and soberness" of Fors itself. Throughout every syllable of which, hitherto written, the reader will find one consistent purpose, and perfectly conceived system, far more deeply founded than any bruited about under their founders' names; including in its balance one vast department of human skill,—the arts,—which the vulgar economists are wholly incapable of weighing; and a yet more vast realm of human enjoyment — the spiritual affections,—which materialist thinkers are alike incapable of imagining: a system not mine, nor Kant's, nor Comte's;—but that which Heaven has taught every true man's heart, and proved by every true man's work, from the beginning of time to this day.

I use the word 'Heaven' here in an absolutely literal sense, meaning the blue sky, and the light and air of it. Men who live in that light,—"in pure sunshine, not under mixed-up shade,"—and whose actions are open as the air, always arrive at certain conditions of moral and practical loyalty, which are wholly independent of religious opinion. These, it has been the first business of Fors to

declare. Whether there be one God or three,—no God, or ten thousand,—children should have enough to eat, and their skins should be washed clean. It is not *I* who say that. Every mother's heart under the sun says that, if she has one.

Again, whether there be saints in Heaven or not, as long as its stars shine on the sea, and the thunnies swim there—every fisherman who drags a net ashore is bound to say to as many human creatures as he can, 'Come and dine.' And the fishmongers who destroy their fish by cartloads that they may make the poor pay dear for what is left, ought to be flogged round Billingsgate, and out of it. It is not *I* who say that. Every man's heart on sea and shore says that—if he isn't at heart a rascal. Whatever is dictated in Fors is dictated thus by common sense, common equity, common humanity, and common sunshine—not by me.

But farther. I have just now used the word 'Heaven' in a nobler sense also: meaning, Heaven and our Father therein.

And beyond the power of its sunshine, which all men may know, Fors has declared also the power of its Fatherhood,—which only some men know, and others do not,—and, except by rough teaching, may not. For the wise of all the earth have said in their hearts always, "God is, and there is none beside Him;" and the fools of all the earth have said in their hearts always, "I am, and there is none beside me."

Therefore, beyond the assertion of what is

visibly salutary, Fors contains also the assertion of what is invisibly salutary, or salvation-bringing, in Heaven, to all men who will receive such health: and beyond this an invitation—passing gradually into an imperious call—to all men who trust in God, that they purge their conscience from dead works, and join together in work separated from the fool's; pure, undefiled, and worthy of Him they trust in.

But in the third place. Besides these definitions, first, of what is useful to all the world, and then of what is useful to the wiser part of it, Fors contains much trivial and desultory talk by the way. Scattered up and down in it,—perhaps by the Devil's sowing tares among the wheat,—there is much casual expression of my own personal feelings and faith, together with bits of autobiography, which were allowed place, not without some notion of their being useful, but yet imprudently, and even incontinently, because I could not at the moment hold my tongue about what vexed or interested me, or returned soothingly to my memory.

Now these personal fragments must be carefully sifted from the rest of the book, by readers who wish to understand it, and taken within their own limits,—no whit farther. For instance, when I say that "St. Ursula sent me a flower with her love," it means that I myself am in the habit of thinking of the Greek Persephone, the Latin Proserpina, and the Gothic St. Ursula, as of the same living spirit; and so far regulating my conduct by that idea as to

dedicate my book on Botany to Proserpina; and to think, when I want to write anything pretty about flowers, how St. Ursula would like it said. And when on the Christmas morning in question, a friend staying in Venice brought me a pot of pinks, 'with St. Ursula's love,' the said pot of pinks did afterwards greatly help me in my work;—and reprove me afterwards, in its own way, for the failure of it.

All this effort, or play, of personal imagination is utterly distinct from the teaching of Fors, though I thought at the time its confession innocent, without in any wise advising my readers to expect messages from pretty saints, or reprobation from pots of pinks: only being urgent with them to ascertain clearly in their own minds what they *do* expect comfort or reproof from. Here, for instance, (Sheffield, 12th February,) I am lodging at an honest and hospitable grocer's, who has lent me his own bedroom, of which the principal ornament is a card printed in black and gold, sacred to the memory of his infant son, who died aged fourteen months, and whose tomb is represented under the figure of a broken Corinthian column, with two graceful-winged ladies putting garlands on it. He is comforted by this conception, and, in that degree, believes and feels with me: the merely palpable fact is probably, that his child's body is lying between two tall chimneys which are covering it gradually with cinders. I am quite as clearly aware of that fact as the most scientific of my

friends; and can probably see more in the bricks of the said chimneys than they. But if they can see nothing in Heaven above the chimney tops, nor conceive of anything in spirit greater than themselves, it is not because they have more knowledge than I, but because they have less sense.

Less *common*-sense, — observe: less practical insight into the things which are of instant and constant need to man.

I must yet allow myself a few more words of autobiography touching this point. The doctors said that I went mad, this time two years ago, from overwork. I had not been then working more than usual, and what was usual with me had become easy. But I went mad because nothing came of my work. People would have understood my falling crazy if they had heard that the manuscripts on which I had spent seven years of my old life had all been used to light the fire with, like Carlyle's first volume of the French Revolution. But they could not understand that I should be the least annoyed, far less fall ill in a frantic manner, because, after I had got them published, nobody believed a word of them. Yet the first calamity would only have been misfortune,—the second (the enduring calamity under which I toil) is humiliation, —resisted necessarily by a dangerous and lonely pride.

I spoke just now of the 'wounds' of which that fire in the flesh came; and if any one ask me

faithfully, what the wounds were, I can faithfully give the answer of Zechariah's silenced messenger, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." All alike, in whom I had most trusted for help, failed me in this main work: some mocked at it, some pitied, some rebuked,—all stopped their ears at the cry: and the solitude at last became too great to be endured. I tell this now, because I must say some things that grieve me to say, about the recent work of one of the friends from whom I had expected most sympathy and aid,—the historian J. A. Froude. Faithful, he, as it appeared to me, in all the intent of history: already in the year 1858 shrewdly cognizant of the main facts (with which he alone professed himself concerned) of English life past and present; keenly also, and impartially, sympathetic with every kind of heroism, and mode of honesty. Of him I first learned the story of Sir Richard Grenville; by him was directed to the diaries of the sea captains in Hakluyt; by his influence, when he edited *Fraser's Magazine*, I had been led to the writing of Munera Pulveris: his Rectorial address at St. Andrews was full of insight into the strength of old Scotland; his study of the life of Hugo of Lincoln, into that of yet elder England; and every year, as Auld Reekie and old England sank farther out of memory and honour with others, I looked more passionately for some utterance from him, of noble story about the brave and faithful dead, and noble wrath against

the wretched and miscreant dead-alive. But year by year his words have grown more hesitating and helpless. The first preface to his history is a quite masterly and exhaustive summary of the condition and laws of England before the Reformation; and it most truly introduces the following book as a study of the process by which that condition and those laws were turned upside-down, and inside-out, "as a man wipeth a dish,—wiping it, and turning it upside-down;" so that, from the least thing to the greatest, if our age is light, those ages were dark; if our age is right, those ages were wrong,—and *vice versâ*. There is no possible consent to be got, or truce to be struck, between them. Those ages were feudal, ours free; those reverent, ours impudent; those artful, ours mechanical: the consummate and exhaustive difference being that the creed of the Dark Ages was, "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;" and the creed of the Light Ages has become, "I believe in Father Mud, the Almighty Plastic; and in Father Dollar, the Almighty Drastic."

Now at the time when Mr. Froude saw and announced the irreconcilableness of these two periods, and then went forward to his work on that time of struggling twilight which foretold the existing blaze of day, and general detection of all impostures, he had certainly not made up his mind whether he ought finally to praise the former or the latter days. His reverence for the righteousness of old English

law holds staunch, even to the recognition of it in the most violent states of—literal—ebullition: such, for instance, as the effective check given to the introduction of the arts of Italian poisoning into England, by putting the first English cook who practised them into a pot of convenient size, together with the requisite quantity of water, and publicly boiling him,—a most concise and practical method. Also he rejoices in the old English detestation of idleness, and determination that every person in the land should have a craft to live by, and practise it honestly: and in manifold other matters I perceive the backward leaning of his inmost thoughts; and yet in the very second page of this otherwise grand preface, wholly in contravention of his own principle that the historian has only to do with facts, he lets slip this—conciliating is it? or careless? or really intended?—in any case amazing—sentence, "A condition of things" (the earlier age) "differing both outwardly and inwardly from that *into which a happier fortune has introduced ourselves*." An amazing sentence, I repeat, in its triple assumptions,—each in itself enormous: the first, that it is happier to live without, than with, the fear of God; the second, that it is chance, and neither our virtue nor our wisdom, that has procured us this happiness;—the third, that the 'ourselves' of Onslow Gardens and their neighbourhood may sufficiently represent also the ourselves of Siberia and the Rocky Mountains—of Afghanistan and Zululand.

None of these assumptions have foundation; and for fastening the outline of their shadowy and meteoric form, Mr. Froude is working under two deadly disadvantages. Intensely loving and desiring Truth before all things, nor without sympathy even for monkish martyrs,—see the passage last quoted in my last written Fors, p. 327,—he has yet allowed himself to slip somehow into the notion that Protestantism and the love of Truth are synonymous; —so that, for instance, the advertisements which decorate in various fresco the station of the Great Northern Railway, and the newspapers vended therein to the passengers by the morning train, appear to him treasures of human wisdom and veracity, as compared with the benighted ornamentation of the useless Lesche of Delphi, or the fanciful stains on the tunnel roof of the Lower Church of Assisi. And this the more, because, for second deadly disadvantage, he has no knowledge of art, nor care for it; and therefore, in his life of Hugo of Lincoln, passes over the Bishop's designing, and partly building, its cathedral, with a word, as if he had been no more than a woodman building a hut: and in his recent meditations at St. Albans, he never puts the primal question concerning those long cliffs of abbey-wall, how the men who thought of them and built them, differed, in make and build of soul, from the apes who can only pull them down and build bad imitations of them: but he fastens like a remora on the nearer, narrower, copper-coating of fact—that countless bats and owls did at

last cluster under the abbey-eaves; fact quite sufficiently known before now, and loudly enough proclaimed to the votaries of the Goddess of Reason, round *her* undefiled altars. So that there was not the slightest need for Mr. Froude's sweeping out these habitations of doleful creatures. Had he taken an actual broom of resolutely bound birch twigs, and, in solemn literalness of act, swept down the wretched jackdaws' nests, which at this moment make a slippery dunghill-slope, and mere peril of spiral perdition, out of what was once the safe and decent staircase of central Canterbury tower, he would have better served his generation. But after he had, to his own satisfaction, sifted the mass of bonedust, and got at the worst that could be seen or smelt in the cells of monks, it was next, and at least his duty, as an impartial historian, to compare with them the smells of modern unmonastic cells; (unmonastic, that is to say, in their scorn of sculpture and painting,—monastic enough in their separation of life from life). Yielding no whit to Mr. Froude in love of Fact and Truth, I will place beside his picture of the monk's cell, in the Dark Ages, two or three pictures by eye-witnesses—yes, and by line-and-measure witnesses—of the manufacturer's cell, in the happier times "to which Fortune has introduced ourselves." I translate them (nearly as Fors opens the pages to me) from M. Jules Simon's 'L'Ouvrière,' a work which I recommend in the most earnest manner, as a text-book for the study of French in young ladies' schools. It must, however,

be observed, prefatorily, that these descriptions were given in 1864; and I have no doubt that as soon as this Fors is published, I shall receive indignant letters from all the places named in the extracts, assuring me that nothing of the sort exists there now. Of which letters I must also say, in advance, that I shall take no notice; being myself prepared, on demand, to furnish any quantity of similar pictures, seen with my own eyes, in the course of a single walk with a policeman through the back streets of any modern town which has fine front ones. And I take M. Jules Simon's studies from life merely because it gives me less trouble to translate them than to write fresh ones myself. But I think it probable that they *do* indicate the culminating power of the manufacturing interest in causing human degradation; and that things may indeed already be in some struggling initial state of amendment. What things *were*, at their worst, and were virtually *everywhere*, I record as a most important contribution to the History of France, and Europe, in the words of an honourable and entirely accurate and trustworthy Frenchman.

"Elbœuf, where the industrial prosperity is so great, ought to have healthy lodgings. It is a quite new town, and one which may easily extend itself upon the hills (*coteaux*) which surround it. We find already, in effect, *jusqu'à mi-côte* (I don't know what that means, —half-way up the hill?), beside a little road bordered by smiling shrubs, some small houses built without care and without intelligence by little speculators scarcely

less wretched than the lodgers they get together"—(this sort of landlord is one of the worst modern forms of Centaur,—half usurer, half gambler). "You go up two or three steps made of uncut stones" (none the worse for that though, M. Jules Simon), "and you find yourself in a little room lighted by one narrow window, and of which the four walls of earth have never been white-washed nor rough-cast. Some half-rotten oak planks thrown down on the soil pretend to be a flooring. Close to the road, an old woman pays sevenpence halfpenny a week," (sixty-five centimes,—roughly, forty francs, or thirty shillings a year,) "for a mud hut which is literally naked—neither bed, chair, nor table in it (*c'est en demeurer confondu*). She sleeps upon a little straw, too rarely renewed; while her son, who is a labourer at the port, sleeps at night upon the damp ground, without either straw or covering. At some steps farther on, a little back from the road, a weaver, sixty years old, inhabits a sort of hut or sentry-box, (for one does not know what name to give it,) of which the filth makes the heart sick" (he means the stomach too—*fait soulever le cœur*). "It is only a man's length, and a yard and a quarter broad; he has remained in it night and day for twenty years. He is now nearly an idiot, and refuses to occupy a better lodging which one proposes to him.

"The misery is not less horrible, and it is much more general at Rouen. One cannot form an idea of the filth of certain houses without having seen it. The poor people feed their fire with the refuse of the apples which have served to make cider, and which they get given them for nothing. They have quantities of them in the corner of their rooms, and a hybrid vegetation comes out of these masses of vegetable matter in putrefaction.

Sometimes the proprietors, ill paid, neglect the most urgent repairs. In a garret of the Rue des Matelas, the floor, entirely rotten, trembles under the step of the visitor; at two feet from the door is a hole larger than the body of a man. The two unhappy women who live there are obliged to cry to you to take care, for they have not anything to put over the hole, not even the end of a plank. There is nothing in their room but their spinning-wheel, two low chairs, and the wrecks of a wooden bedstead without a mattress. In a blind alley at the end of the Rue des Canettes, where the wooden houses seem all on the point of falling, a weaver of braces lodges with his family in a room two yards and a half broad by four yards and three-quarters long, measured on the floor; but a projection formed by the tunnels of the chimney of the lower stories, and all the rest, is so close to the roof that one cannot make three steps upright. When the husband, wife, and four children are all in it, it is clear that they cannot move. One will not be surprised to hear that the want of air and hunger make frequent victims in such a retreat (*reduit*). Of the four children which remained to them in April, 1860, two were dead three months afterwards. When they were visited in the month of April, the physician, M. Leroy, spoke of a ticket that he had given them the week before for milk. 'She has drunk of it,' said the mother pointing to the oldest daughter, half dead, but who had the strength to smile. Hunger had reduced this child, who would have been beautiful, nearly to the state of a skeleton.

"The father of this poor family is a good weaver. He could gain in an ordinary mill from three to four francs a day, while he gains only a franc and a half in the brace manufactory. One may ask why he stays

there. Because at the birth of his last child he had no money at home, nor fire, nor covering, nor light, nor bread. He borrowed twenty francs from his patron, who is an honest man, and he cannot without paying his debt quit that workshop where his work nevertheless does not bring him enough to live on. It is clear that he will die unless some one helps him, but his family will be dead before him."

Think now, you sweet milkmaids of England whose face is your fortune, and you sweet demoiselles of France who are content, as girls should be, with breakfast of brown bread and cream, (read Scribe's little operetta, La Demoiselle à Marier,)—think, I say, how, in this one,—even though she *has* had a cup of cold milk given her in the name of the Lord,—lying still there, "nearly a skeleton," that verse of the song of songs which is Solomon's, must take a new meaning for *you:* "We have a little sister, and she has no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day of her espousals?"

"For the cellars of Lille, those who defend them, were they of Lille itself, have not seen them. There remains one, No. 40 of the Rue des Etaques; the ladder applied against the wall to go down is in such a bad state that you will do well to go down slowly. There is just light enough to read at the foot of the ladder. One cannot read there without compromising one's eyes: the work of sewing is therefore dangerous in that place; a step farther in, it is impossible, and the back of the cave is entirely dark. The soil is damp and unequal, the walls blackened by time and filth. One breathes a thick air which can never be

renewed, because there is no other opening but the trapdoor (*soupirail*). The entire space, three yards by four, is singularly contracted by a quantity of refuse of all sorts, shells of eggs, shells of mussels, crumbled ground and filth, worse than that of the dirtiest dung-hill. It is easy to see that no one ever walks in this cave. Those who live in it lie down and sleep where they fall. The furniture is composed of a very small iron stove of which the top is shaped into a pan, three earthen pots, a stool, and the wood of a bed without any bedding. There is neither straw nor coverlet. The woman who lodges in the bottom of this cellar never goes out of it. She is sixty-three years old. The husband is not a workman: they have two daughters, of which the eldest is twenty-two years old. These four persons live together, and have no other domicile.

"This cave is one of the most miserable, first for the extreme filth and destitution of its inhabitants, next by its dimensions, most of the cellars being one or two yards wider. These caves serve for lodging to a whole family; in consequence, father, mother, and children sleep in the same place, and too often, whatever their age, in the same bed. The greater number of these unhappies see no mischief in this confusion of the sexes; whatever comes of it, they neither conceal it, nor blush for it; nay, they scarcely know that the rest of mankind have other manners. Some of the caves, indeed, are divided in two by an arch, and thus admit of a separation which is not in general made. It is true that in most cases the back cellar is entirely dark, the air closer, and the stench more pestilent. In some the water trickles down the walls, and others are close to a gully-hole, and poisoned by mephitic vapours, especially in summer.

"There are no great differences between the so-called 'courettes' (little alleys) of Lille, and the so called 'forts' of Roubaix, or the 'convents' of St. Quentin; everywhere the same heaping together of persons and the same unhealthiness. At Roubaix, where the town is open, space is not wanting, and all is new,—for the town has just sprung out of the ground,—one has not, as at Lille, the double excuse of a fortified town where space is circumscribed to begin with, and where one cannot build without pulling down. Also at Roubaix there are never enough lodgings for the increasing number of workmen, so that the landlords may be always sure of their rents. Quite recently, a manufacturer who wanted some hands brought some workwomen from Lille, paid them well, and put them in a far more healthy workshop than the one they had left. Nevertheless, coming on Thursday, they left him on Saturday: they had found no place to lodge, and had passed the three nights under a gateway. In this open town, though its rows of lodgings are more than half a mile from the workshops, they are not a bit more healthy. The houses are ill-constructed, squeezed one against another, the ground between not levelled, and often with not even a gutter to carry away the thrown-out slops, which accumulate in stagnant pools till the sun dries them. Here at hazard is the description of some of the lodgings. To begin with a first floor in Wattel Street: one gets up into it by a ladder and a trap without a door; space, two yards and a half by three yards; one window, narrow and low; walls not rough-cast; inhabitants, father, mother, and two children of different sexes,—one ten, the other seventeen: rent, one franc a week. In Halluin Court there is a house with only two windows to its ground floor, one to the

back and one to the front; but this ground floor is divided into three separate lodgings, of which the one in the middle"—(thus ingeniously constructed in the age of light)—"would of course have no window at all, but it is separated from the back and front ones by two lattices, which fill the whole space, and give it the aspect of a glass cage. It results that the household placed in this lodging has no air, and that none of the three households have any privacy, for it is impossible for any person of them to hide any of his movements from the two others. One of these lodgings is let for five francs a month; the woman who inhabits it has five children, though all young, but she has got a sort of cage made in the angle of her room, which can be got up to by a winding staircase, and which can hold a bed. This the lodger has underlet, at seventy-five centimes a week, to a sempstress, abandoned by her lover, with a child of some weeks old. This child is laid on the bed, where it remains alone all the day, and the mother comes to suckle it at noon. A gown and a bonnet, with a little parcel which may contain, at the most, one chemise, are placed on a shelf, and above them an old silk umbrella —an object of great luxury, the *débris* of lost opulence. Nearly all the inhabitants of this court are subject to fever. If an epidemic came on the top of that, the whole population would be carried off. Yet it is not two years since Halluin Court was built."

Such, Mr. Froude, are the 'fortresses' of free—as opposed to feudal—barons; such the 'convents' of philosophic—as opposed to catholic—purity. Will you not tell the happy world of your day, how it may yet be a little happier? It is wholly your business, not mine;—and all these unwilling

words of my tired lips are spoken only because *you* are silent.

I do not propose to encumber the pages of the few last numbers of Fors with the concerns of St. George's Guild: of which the mustard-seed state (mingled hopefully however with that of cress) is scarcely yet overpast. This slackness of growth, as I have often before stated, is more the Master's fault than any one else's, the present Master being a dilatory, dreamy, and—to the much vexation of the more enthusiastic members of the Guild—an extremely patient person; and busying himself at present rather with the things that amuse him in St. George's Museum than with the Guild's wider cares;—of which, however, a separate report will be given to its members in the course of this year, and continued as need is.

Many well-meaning and well-wishing friends outside the Guild, and desirous of entrance, have asked for relaxation of the grievous law concerning the contribution of the tithe of income. Which the Master is not, however, in the least minded to relax; nor any other of the Guild's original laws, none of which were set down without consideration, though this requirement of tithe does indeed operate as a most stiff stockade, and apparently unsurmountable hurdle-fence, in the face of all more or less rich and, so to speak, overweighted, well-wishers. For I find, practically, that fifty pounds a year can often save me five—or at a

pinch, seven—of them; nor should I be the least surprised if some merry-hearted apprentice lad, starting in life with a capital of ten pounds or so, were to send me one of them, and go whistling on his way with the remaining nine. But that ever a man of ten thousand a year should contrive, by any exertion of prudence and self-denial, to live upon so small a sum as nine thousand, and give one thousand to the poor,—this is a height of heroism wholly inconceivable to modern pious humanity.

Be that as it may, I am of course ready to receive subscriptions for St. George's work from outsiders —whether zealous or lukewarm—in such amounts as they think fit: and at present I conceive that the proposed enlargements of our museum at Sheffield are an object with which more frank sympathy may be hoped than with the agricultural business of the Guild. Ground I have, enough—and place for a pleasant gallery for such students as Sheffield may send up into the clearer light;*—but I don't choose to sell out any of St. George's stock for this purpose, still less for the purchase of books for the Museum, —and yet there are many I want, and can't yet afford. Mr. Quaritch, for instance, has an eleventh century Lectionary, a most precious MS., which would be a foundation for all manner of good learning to us: but it is worth its weight in silver, and

* An excellent and kind account of the present form and contents of the Museum will be found in the last December number of *Cassell's Magazine of Art.*

inaccessible for the present. Also my casts from St. Mark's, of sculptures never cast before, are lying in lavender—or at least in tow—invisible and useless, till I can build walls for them: and I think the British public would not regret giving me the means of placing and illuminating these rightly. And, in fine, here I am yet for a few years, I trust, at their service—ready to arrange such a museum for their artizans as they have not yet dreamed of;—not dazzling nor overwhelming, but comfortable, useful, and—in such sort as smoke-cumbered skies may admit,—beautiful; though not, on the outside, otherwise decorated than with plain and easily-worked slabs of Derbyshire marble, with which I shall face the walls, making the interior a working man's Bodleian Library, with cell and shelf of the most available kind, undisturbed, for his holiday time. The British public are not likely to get such a thing done by any one else for a time, if they don't get it done now by me, when I'm in the humour for it. Very positively I can assure them of that; and so leave the matter to their discretion.

Many more serious matters, concerning the present day, I have in mind—and partly written, already; but they must be left for next Fors, which will take up the now quite imminent question of Land, and its Holding, and Lordship.

LETTER LXXXIX

WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

TO THE TRADES UNIONS OF ENGLAND

BEAUVAIS, *August* 31, 1880.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—This is the first letter in Fors which has been addressed to you as a body of workers separate from the other Englishmen who are doing their best, with heart and hand, to serve their country in any sphere of its business, and in any rank of its people. I have never before acknowledged the division marked, partly in your own imagination, partly in the estimate of others, and of late, too sadly, staked out in permanence by animosities and misunderstandings on both sides, between you, and the mass of society to which you look for employment. But I recognize the distinction to-day, moved, for one thing, by a kindly notice of last Fors, which appeared in the *Bingley Telephone* of April 23rd of this year; saying, "that it was to be wished I would write more to and for the workmen and workwomen of these realms," and influenced conclusively by the fact of your having expressed by your delegates at Sheffield your sympathy with what endeavours I had made for the founding a

Museum there different in principle from any yet arranged for working men: this formal recognition of my effort, on your part, signifying to me, virtually, that the time was come for explaining my aims to you, fully, and in the clearest terms possible to me.

But, believe me, there have been more reasons than I need now pass in review, for my hitherto silence respecting your special interests. Of which reasons, this alone might satisfy you, that, as a separate class, I knew scarcely anything of you but your usefulness, and your distress; and that the essential difference between me and other political writers of your day, is that I never say a word about a single thing that I don't know, while they never trouble themselves to know a single thing they talk of; but give you their own 'opinions' about it, or tell you the gossip they have heard about it, or insist on what they like in it, or rage against what they dislike in it; but entirely decline either to look at, or to learn, or to speak, the Thing as it is, and must be.

Now I know many things that are, and many that must be hereafter, concerning my own class: but I know nothing yet, practically, of yours, and could give you no serviceable advice either in your present disputes with your masters, or in your plans of education and action for yourselves, until I had found out more clearly, what you meant by a Master, and what you wanted to gain either in education or action,—and, even farther, whether the kind of person you meant by a Master was one in reality or

not, and the things you wanted to gain by your labour were indeed worth your having or not. So that nearly everything hitherto said in Fors has been addressed, in main thought, to your existing Masters, Pastors, and Princes,—not to you,—though these all I class with you, if they knew it, as "workmen and labourers," and you with them, if *you* knew it, as capable of the same joys as they, tempted by the same passions as they, and needing, for your life, to recognize the same Father and Father's Law over you all, as brothers in earth and in heaven.

But there was another, and a more sharply restrictive reason for my never, until now, addressing you as a distinct class;—namely, that certain things which I knew positively must be soon openly debated—and what is more, determined—in a manner very astonishing to some people, in the natural issue of the transference of power out of the hands of the upper classes, so called, into yours, —transference which has been compelled by the crimes of those upper classes, and accomplished by their follies,—these certain things, I say, coming now first into fully questionable shape, could not be openly announced as subjects of debate by any man in my then official position as one of a recognized body of University teachers, without rendering him suspected and disliked by a large body of the persons with whom he had to act. And I considered that in accepting such a position at all I had virtually promised to teach nothing contrary to the principles on which the Church and the Schools

of England believed themselves—whether mistakenly or not—to have been founded.

The pledge was easy to me, because I love the Church and the Universities of England more faithfully than most churchmen, and more proudly than most collegians; though my pride is neither in my college boat, nor my college plate, nor my college class-list, nor my college heresy. I love both the Church and the schools of England, for the sake of the brave and kindly men whom they have hitherto not ceased to send forth into all lands, well nurtured, and bringing, as a body, wherever their influence extended, order and charity into the ways of mortals.

And among these I had hoped long since to have obtained hearing, not for myself, but for the Bible which their Mothers reverenced, the laws which their Fathers obeyed, and the wisdom which the Masters of all men—the dead Senate of the noblest among the nations—had left for the guidance of the ages yet to be. And during seven years I went on appealing to my fellow scholars, in words clear enough to them, though not to you, had they chosen to hear: but not one cared nor listened, till I had sign sternly given to me that my message to the learned and the rich was given, and ended.

And now I turn to you, understanding you to be associations of labouring men who have recognized the necessity of binding yourselves by some common law of action, and who are taking earnest counsel as to the conditions of your lives here in England, and

their relations to those of your fellow-workers in foreign lands. And I understand you to be, in these associations, disregardant, if not actually defiant, of the persons on whose capital you have been hitherto passively dependent for occupation, and who have always taught you, by the mouths of their appointed Economists, that they and their capital were an eternal part of the Providential arrangements made for this world by its Creator.

In which self-assertion, nevertheless, and attitude of inquiry into the grounds of this statement of theirs, you are unquestionably right. For, as things are nowadays, you know any pretty lady in the Elysian fields of Paris who can set a riband of a new colour in her cap in a taking way, forthwith sets a few thousands of Lyonnaise spinners and dyers furiously weaving ribands of like stuff, and washing them with like dye. And in due time the new French edict reaches also your sturdy English mind, and the steeples of Coventry ring in the reign of the elect riband, and the Elysian fields of Spital, or whatever other hospice now shelters the weaver's head, bestir themselves according to the French pattern, and bedaub themselves with the French dye; and the pretty lady thinks herself your everlasting benefactress, and little short of an angel sent from heaven to feed you with miraculous manna, and you are free Britons that rule the waves, and free Frenchmen that lead the universe, of course; but you have not a bit of land you can stand on—without somebody's leave, nor a house for your children

that they can't be turned out of, nor a bit of bread for their breakfast to-morrow, but on the chance of some more yards of riband being wanted. Nor have you any notion that the pretty lady herself can be of the slightest use to you, except as a consumer of ribands; what God made *her* for—you do not ask: still less she, what God made *you* for.

How many are there of you, I wonder, landless, roofless, foodless, unless, for such work as they choose to put you to, the upper classes provide you with cellars in Lille, glass cages in Halluin Court, milk tickets, for which your children still have "the strength to smile—"* How many of you, tell me, —and what your united hands and wits are worth at your own reckoning?

Trade Unions of England—Trade Armies of Christendom, what's the roll-call of you, and what part or lot have you, hitherto, in this Holy Christian Land of your Fathers? Is not that inheritance to be claimed, and the Birth Right of it, no less than the Death Right? Will you not determine where you may be Christianly bred, before you set your blockhead Parliaments to debate where you may be Christianly buried, (your priests also all a-squabble about that matter, as I hear,—as if any ground could be consecrated that had the bones of rascals in it, or profane where a good man slept!) But how the Earth that you tread may be consecrated to you,

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* See Fors for March of this year, Letter LXXXVIII. p. 351, with the sequel.

and the roofs that shade your breathing sleep, and the deeds that you do with the breath of life yet strengthening hand and heart,—this it is your business to learn, if you know not; and this mine to tell you, if you will learn.

Before the close of last year, one of our most earnest St. George's Guildsmen wrote to me saying that the Irish Land League claimed me as one of their supporters; and asking if he should contradict this, or admit it.

To whom I answered, on Christmas Day of 1879, as follows:—

"Brantwood, *Christmas*, '79.

"You know I never read papers, so I have never seen a word of the Irish Land League or its purposes; but I assume the purpose to be — that Ireland should belong to Irishmen; which is not only a most desirable, but, ultimately, a quite inevitable condition of things,—that being the assured intention of the Maker of Ireland, and all other lands.

"But as to the manner of belonging, and limits and rights of holding, there is a good deal more to be found out of the intentions of the Maker of Ireland, than I fancy the Irish League is likely to ascertain, without rueful experience of the consequences of any and all methods contrary to those intentions.

"And for my own part I should be wholly content to confine the teaching—as I do the effort—

of the St. George's Guild, to the one utterly harmless and utterly wholesome principle, that land, by whomsoever held, is to be made the most of, by human strength, and not defiled, nor left waste. But since we live in an epoch assuredly of change, and too probably of Revolution; and thoughts which cannot be put aside are in the minds of all men capable of thought, I am obliged also to affirm the one principle which can—and in the end will—close all epochs of Revolution,—that each man shall possess the ground he can use—and no more,—USE, I say, either for food, beauty, exercise, science, or any other sacred purpose. That each man shall *possess*, for his own, no more than such portion, with the further condition that it descends to his son, inalienably—right of primogeniture being in this matter eternally sure. The nonsense talked about division is all temporary; you can't divide for ever, and when you have got down to a cottage and a square fathom—if you allow division so far—still primogeniture will hold the right of that.

"But though *possession* is, and must be, limited by use (see analytic passages on this head in 'Munera Pulveris'), Authority is not. And first the Maker of the Land, and then the King of the Land, and then the Overseers of the Land appointed by the King, in their respective orders, must all in their ranks control the evil, and promote the good work of the possessors. Thus far, you will find already, all is stated in Fors; and *further*, the right of every man to possess so much land as he

can *live* on—especially observe the meaning of the developed Corn Law Rhyme,

> "Find'st thou rest for England's head
> Free alone among the Dead?" *

meaning that Bread, Water, and the Roof over his head, must be tax- (*i.e.* rent-) free to every man.

"But I have never yet gone on in Fors to examine the possibly best forms of practical administration. I always felt it would be wasted time, for these *must* settle themselves. In Savoy the cottager has his garden and field, and labours with his family only; in Berne, the farm labourers of a considerable estate live under the master's roof, and are strictly domestic; in England, farm labourers might probably with best comfort live in detached cottages; in Italy, they might live in a kind of monastic fraternity. All this, circumstance, time, and national character must determine; the one thing St. George affirms is the duty of the master in every case to make the lives of his dependents noble to the best of his power."

Now you must surely feel that the questions I have indicated in this letter could only be answered rightly by the severest investigation of the effect of each mode of human life suggested, as hitherto seen in connection with other national institutions, and hereditary customs and character. Yet every snipping and scribbling blockhead hired by the

* See Fors, Letter LXXIV. p. 30 (note).

bookseller to paste newspaper paragraphs into what may sell for a book, has his 'opinion' on these things, and will announce it to you as the new gospel of eternal and universal salvation—without a qualm of doubt — or of shame — in the entire loggerhead of him.

Hear, for instance, this account of the present prosperity, and of its causes, in the country of those Sea Kings who taught you your own first trades of fishing and battle:—

"The Norwegian peasant is a free man on the scanty bit of ground which he has inherited from his fathers: and he has all the virtues of a freeman—an open character, a mind clear of every falsehood, an hospitable heart for the stranger. His religious feelings are deep and sincere, and the Bible is to be found in every hut. He is said to be indolent and phlegmatic: but when necessity urges he sets vigorously to work, and never ceases till his task is done. His courage and his patriotism are abundantly proved by a history of a thousand years.

"Norway owes her present prosperity chiefly to her liberal constitution. The press is completely free, and the power of the king extremely limited. All privileges and hereditary titles are abolished. The Parliament, or the 'Storthing,' which assembles every three years, consists of the 'Odelthing,' or Upper House, and of the 'Lögthing,' or Legislative Assembly. Every new law requires the royal sanction; but if the 'Storthing' has voted it in three successive sittings, it is definitely adopted in spite of the royal veto. Public education is admirably cared for. There is an elementary school

in every village; and where the population is too thinly scattered, the schoolmaster may truly be said to be abroad, as he wanders from farm to farm, so that the most distant families have the benefit of his instruction. Every town has its public library; and in many districts the peasants annually contribute a dollar towards a collection of books, which, under the care of the priest, is lent out to all subscribers.

"No Norwegian is confirmed who does not know how to read, and no Norwegian is allowed to marry who has not been confirmed. He who attains his twentieth year without having been confirmed, has to fear the House of Correction. Thus ignorance is punished as a crime in Norway, an excellent example for far richer and more powerful governments."

I take this account from a book on the Arctic regions, in which I find the facts collected extremely valuable, the statements, as far as I can judge, trustworthy, the opinions and teachings—what you can judge of by this specimen. Do you think the author wise in attributing the prosperity of Norway chiefly to her king's being crippled, and her newspapers free? or that perhaps her thousand years of courage may have some share in the matter? and her mind clear of every falsehood? and her way of never ceasing in a task till it is done? and her circulating schoolmasters? and her collected libraries? and her preparation for marriage by education? and her House of Correction for the uneducated? and her Bible in every hut? and, finally, her granted piece of his native land under her peasant's foot for his own? Is her strength, think you, in any

of these things, or only in the abolition of hereditary titles, the letting loose of her news-mongers, and the binding of her king? *Date* of their modern constitutional measures, you observe, not given! and consequences, perhaps, scarcely yet conclusively ascertainable. If you cannot make up your own minds on one or two of these open questions, suppose you were to try an experiment or two? Your scientific people will tell you—and this, at least, truly—that they cannot find out anything without experiment: you may also in political matters think and talk for ever—resultlessly. Will you never try what comes of Doing a thing for a few years, perseveringly, and keep the result of that, at least, for known?

Now I write to you, observe, without knowing, except in the vaguest way, who you *are!*—what trades you belong to, what arts or crafts you practise—or what ranks of workmen you include, and what manner of idlers you exclude. I have no time to make out the different sets into which you fall, or the different interests by which you are guided. But I know perfectly well what sets you *should* fall into, and by what interests you *should* be guided. And you will find your profit in listening while I explain these to you somewhat more clearly than your penny-a-paragraph liberal papers will.

In the first place, what business have you to call yourselves only *Trade* Guilds, as if 'trade,' and not production, were your main concern? Are you by

profession nothing more than pedlars and mongers of things, or are you also makers of things?

It is too true that in our City wards our chapmen have become the only dignitaries—and we have the Merchant-Tailors' Company, but not the plain Tailors; and the Fishmongers' Company, but not the Fishermen's; and the Vintners' Company, but not the Vinedressers'; and the Ironmonger's Company, but not the Blacksmiths'; while, though, for one apparent exception, the Goldsmiths' Company proclaims itself for masters of a craft, what proportion, think you, does its honour bear compared with that of the Calf-worshipful Guild of the Gold Mongers?

Be it far from me to speak scornfully of trade. My Father—whose Charter of Freedom of London Town I keep in my Brantwood treasury beside missal and cross—sold good wine, and had, over his modest door in Billiter Street, no bush. But he grew his wine, before he sold it; and could answer for it with his head, that no rotten grapes fermented in his vats, and no chemist's salt effervesced in his bottles. Be you also Tradesmen—in your place—and in your right; but be you, primarily, Growers, Makers, Artificers, Inventors, of things good and precious. What talk you of Wages? Whose is the Wealth of the World but yours? Whose is the Virtue? Do you mean to go on for ever, leaving your wealth to be consumed by the idle, and your virtue to be mocked by the vile?

The wealth of the world is yours; even your

common rant and rabble of economists tell you that; —"no wealth without industry." Who robs you of it, then, or beguiles you? Whose fault is it, you clothmakers, that any English child is in rags? Whose fault is it, you shoemakers, that the street harlots mince in high-heeled shoes, and your own babes paddle barefoot in the street slime? Whose fault is it, you bronzed husbandmen, that through all your furrowed England, children are dying of famine? Primarily, of course, it is your clergymen's and masters' fault: but also in this your own, that you never educate any of your children with the earnest object of enabling them to see their way out of this, not by rising above their father's business, but by setting in order what was amiss in it: also in this your own, that none of you who do rise above your business, ever seem to keep the memory of what wrong they have known, or suffered; nor, as masters, set a better example than others.

Your own fault, at all events, it will be now, seeing that you have got Parliamentary power in your hands, if you cannot use it better than the moribund Parliamentary body has done hitherto.

To which end, I beg you first to take these following truths into your good consideration.

First. Men don't and can't live by exchanging articles, but by producing them. They don't live by trade, but by work. Give up that foolish and vain title of Trades Unions; and take that of Labourers' Unions.

And, whatever divisions chance or special need

may have thrown you into at present, remember there are essential and eternal divisions of the Labour of man, into which you *must* practically fall, whether you like it or not; and these eternal classifications it would be infinitely better if you at once acknowledged in thought, name, and harmonious action. Several of the classes may take finer divisions in their own body, but you will find the massive general structure of working humanity range itself under these following heads, the first eighteen assuredly essential; the three last, making twenty-one altogether, I shall be able, I think, to prove to you are not superfluous:—suffer their association with the rest in the meantime.

1. Shepherds.
2. Fishermen.
3. Ploughmen.
4. Gardeners.
5. Carpenters and Woodmen.
6. Builders and Quarrymen.
7. Shipwrights.
8. Smiths and Miners.
9. Bakers and Millers.
10. Vintners.
11. Graziers and Butchers.
12. Spinners.
13. Linen and Cotton-workers.
14. Silk-workers.
15. Woollen-workers.
16. Tanners and Furriers.
17. Tailors and Milliners.

18. Shoemakers.
19. Musicians.
20. Painters.
21. Goldsmiths.

Get these eighteen, or twenty-one, as you like to take them, each thoroughly organized, proud of their work, and doing it under masters, if any, of their own rank, chosen for their sagacity and vigour, and the world is yours, and all the pleasures of it, that are true; while all false pleasures in such a life fall transparent, and the hooks are seen through the baits of them. But for the organization of these classes, you see there must be a certain quantity of land available to them, proportioned to their multitude: and without the possession of that, nothing can be done ultimately; though at present the mere organization of your masses under these divisions will clear the air, and the field, for you, to astonishment.

And for the possession of the land, mind you, if you try to take it by force, you will have every blackguard and vaut-rien in the world claiming his share of it with you,—for by that law of force he has indeed as much right to it as you; but by the law of labour he has not. Therefore you must get your land by the law of labour; working for it, saving for it, and buying it, as the spendthrifts and idlers offer it you: but buying never to let go.

And this, therefore, is practically the first thing you have to bring in by your new Parliaments—a system of land tenure, namely, by which your

organized classes of labouring men may possess their land as corporate bodies, and add to it—as the monks once did, and as every single landlord can, now; but I find that my St. George's Guild cannot, except through complications or legal equivocations almost endless, and hitherto indeed paralyzing me in quite unexpectedly mean and miserable ways.

Now I hope all this has been clearly enough said, for once: and it shall be farther enforced and developed as you choose, if you will only tell me by your chosen heads whether you believe it, and are any of you prepared to act on it, and what kinds of doubt or difficulty occur to you about it, and what farther questions you would like me to answer.

And that you may have every power of studying the matter (so far as *I* am concerned), *this* Fors you shall have gratis;—and the next, if you enable me to make it farther useful to you. That is to say, your committees of each trade-guild may order parcels of them from my publisher in any quantities they wish, for distribution among their members. To the public its price remains fixed, as that of all my other books. One word only let me say in conclusion, to explain at once what I mean by saying that the pleasures of the world are all yours.

God has made man to take pleasure in the use of his eyes, wits, and body. And the foolish creature is continually trying to live without looking at anything, without thinking about anything,

and without doing anything. And he thus becomes not only a brute, but the unhappiest of brutes. All the lusts and lazinesses he can contrive only make him more wretched; and at this moment, if a man walks watchfully the streets of Paris, whence I am now writing to you,—a city in which every invention that science, wit, and wealth can hit upon to provoke and to vary the pleasures of the idle,—he will not see one happy or tranquil face, except among the lower and very hard-labouring classes. Every pleasure got otherwise than God meant it—got cheaply, thievingly, and swiftly, when He has ordered that it should be got dearly, honestly, and slowly,—turns into a venomous burden, and, past as a pleasure, remains as a load, increasing day by day its deadly coat of burning mail. The joys of hatred, of battle, of lust, of vain knowledge, of vile luxury, all pass into slow torture: nothing remains to man, nothing is possible to him of true joy, but in the righteous love of his fellows; in the knowledge of the laws and the glory of God, and in the daily use of the faculties of soul and body with which that God has endowed him.

PARIS, 18*th September*, 1880.

LETTER XC

LOST JEWELS

May, 1883.

I AM putting my house in order; and would fain put my past work in order too, if I could. Some guidance, at least, may be given to the readers of Fors—or to its partial readers—in their choice of this or that number. To this end I have now given each monthly part its own name, indicative of its special subject. The connection of all these subjects, and of the book itself with my other books, may perhaps begin to show itself in this letter.

The first principle of my political economy will be found again and again reiterated in all the said books,—that the material wealth of any country is the portion of its possessions which feeds and educates good men and women in it; the connected principle of national policy being that the strength and power of a country depends absolutely on the quantity of good men and women in the territory of it, and not at all on the extent of the territory—still less on the number of vile or stupid inhabitants. A good crew in a good ship, however small, is a power; but a bad crew in the biggest ship—none,—and the best crew in a ship cut in half by a

collision in a hurry, not much the better for their numbers.

Following out these two principles, I have farther, and always, taught that, briefly, the wealth of a country *is in* its good men and women, and in nothing else: that the riches of England are good Englishmen; of Scotland, good Scotchmen; of Ireland, good Irishmen. This is first, and more or less eloquently, stated in the close of the chapter called the Veins of Wealth, of 'Unto this Last'; and is scientifically, and in sifted terms, explained and enforced in 'Munera Pulveris.' I have a word or two yet to add to what I have written, which I will try to keep very plain and unfigurative.

It is taught, with all the faculty I am possessed of, in 'Sesame and Lilies,' that in a state of society in which men and women are as good as they can be, (under mortal limitation), the women will be the guiding and purifying power. In savage and embryo countries, they are openly oppressed, as animals of burden; in corrupted and fallen countries, more secretly and terribly. I am not careful concerning the oppression which they are able to announce themselves, forming anti-feminine-slavery colleges and institutes, etc.; but of the oppression which they cannot resist, ending in their destruction, I am careful exceedingly.

The merely calculable phenomena of economy are indeed supposed at present to indicate a glut of them; but our economists do not appear ever to ask themselves of what *quality* the glut is, or, at all

events, in what quality it would be wisest to restrict the supply, and in what quality, educated according to the laws of God, the supply *is* at present restricted.

I think the experience of most thoughtful persons will confirm me in saying that extremely good girls, (good children, broadly, but especially girls,) usually die young. The pathos of their deaths is constantly used in poetry and novels; but the power of the fiction rests, I suppose, on the fact that most persons of affectionate temper have lost their own May Queens or little Nells in their time. For my own part of grief, I have known a little Nell die, and a May Queen die, and a queen of May, and of December also, die;—all of them, in economists' language, 'as good as gold,' and in Christian language, 'only a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honour.' And I could count the like among my best-loved friends, with a rosary of tears.

It seems, therefore, that God takes care, under present circumstances, to prevent, or at least to check, the glut of that kind of girls. *Seems*, I say, and say with caution—for perhaps it is not entirely in His good pleasure that these things are so. But, they being so, the question becomes therefore yet more imperative—how far a country paying this enforced tax of its good girls annually to heaven is wise in taking little account of the number it has left? For observe that, just beneath these girls of heaven's own, come another kind, who are just

earthly enough to be allowed to stay with us; but who get put out of the way into convents, or made mere sick-nurses of, or take to mending the irremediable,—(I've never got over the loss to me, for St. George's work, of one of the sort). Still, the nuns are always happy themselves; and the nurses do a quantity of good that may be thought of as infinite in its own way; and there's a chance of their being forced to marry a King of the Lombards and becoming Queen Theodolindas and the like: pass these, and we come to a kind of girl, just as good, but with less strong will *—who is more or less spoilable and mis-manageable: and these are almost sure to come to grief, by the faults of others, or merely by the general fashions and chances of the world. In romance, for instance, Juliet—Lucy Ashton—Amy Robsart. In my own experience, I knew one of these killed merely by a little piece of foolish pride—the exactly opposite fault to Juliet's.† She was the niece of a most trusted friend of my father's, also a much trusted friend of mine in the earliest Herne Hill days of my Cock Robin-hood; when I used to transmute his name, Mr. Dowie, into 'Mr. Good-do,' not being otherwise clear about its pronunciation. His niece

* Or, it may be, stronger animal passion,—a greater inferiority.

† Juliet, being a girl of a noble Veronese house, had no business to fall in love at first sight with anybody. It is her humility that is the death of her; and Imogen would have died in the same way, but for her helpful brothers. Of Desdemona, see 'Fors' for November 1877 (vol. iv., p. 247).

was an old sea-captain's only daughter, motherless, and may have been about twenty years old when I was twelve. She was certainly the most beautiful girl of the pure English-Greek * type I ever saw, or ever am likely to see of any type whatever. I've only since seen one who could match her, but she was Norman-English. My mother was her only confidante in her love affairs: consisting mostly in gentle refusals—not because she despised people, or was difficult to please, but wanted simply to stay with her father; and did so serenely, modestly, and with avoidance of all pain she could spare her lovers, dismissing quickly and firmly, never tempting or playing with them.

At last, when she was some five or six and twenty, came one whom she had no mind to dismiss; and suddenly finding herself caught, she drew up like a hart at bay. The youth, unluckily for him, dared not push his advantage, lest he should be sent away like the rest; and would not speak,—partly could not, loving her better than the rest, and struck dumb, as an honest and modest English lover is apt to be, when he was near her; so that she fancied he did not care for her. At last, she came to my mother to ask what she should do. My mother said, "Go away for a while,—if he

* By the English-Greek type, I mean the features of the statue of Psyche at Naples, with finely-pencilled dark brows, rather dark hair, and bright pure colour. I never forget beautiful faces, nor confuse their orders of dignity, so that I am quite sure of the statement in the text.

cares for you, he will follow you; if not, there's no harm done."

But she dared not put it to the touch, thus, but lingered on, where she could sometimes see him,—and yet, in her girl's pride, lest he should find out she liked him, treated him worse than she had anybody ever before. Of course this piece of wisdom soon brought matters to an end. The youth gave up all hope, went away, and, in a month or two after, died of the then current plague, cholera: upon which his sister—I do not know whether in wrath or folly—told his mistress the whole matter, and showed her what she had done. The poor girl went on quietly taking care of her father, till his death, which soon followed; then, with some kindly woman-companion, went to travel.

Some five or six years afterwards, my father and mother and I were going up to Chamouni, by the old char-road under the Cascade de Chède. There used to be an idiot beggar-girl, who always walked up beside the chars, not ugly or cretinous, but inarticulate and wild-eyed, moaning a little at intervals. She came to be, in time, year after year, a part of the scene, which one would even have been sorry to have lost. As we drew near the top of the long hill, and this girl had just ceased following, a lady got out of a char at some little distance behind, and ran up to ours, holding out her hands.

We none of us knew her. There was something in the eyes like the wild look of the other's; the

face was wrinkled, and a little hard in expression—Alpine, now, in its beauty. "Don't you know Sybilla?" said she. My mother made her as happy as she could for a week at Chamouni,—I am not sure if they ever met again: the girl wandered about wistfully a year or two longer, then died of rapid decline.

I have told this story in order to draw two pieces of general moral from it, which may perhaps be more useful than if they were gathered from fable.

First, a girl's proper confidant is her father. If there is any break whatever in her trust in him, from her infancy to her marriage, there is wrong somewhere,—often on his part, but most likely it is on hers; by getting into the habit of talking with her girl-friends about what they have no business with, and her father much. What she is not inclined to tell her father, should be told to no one; and, in nine cases out of ten, not thought of by herself.

And I believe that few fathers, however wrong-headed or hard-hearted, would fail of answering the habitual and patient confidence of their child with true care for her. On the other hand, no father *deserves*, nor can he entirely and beautifully win, his daughter's confidence, unless he loves her better than he does himself, which is not always the case. But again here, the fault may not be all on papa's side.

In the instance before us, the relations between the motherless daughter and her old sea-captain

father were entirely beautiful, but not rational enough. *He* ought to have known, and taught his pretty Sybilla, that she had other duties in the world than those immediately near his own arm-chair; and she, if resolved not to marry while he needed her, should have taken more care of her own heart, and followed my mother's wise counsel at once.

In the second place, when a youth is fully in love with a girl, and feels that he is wise in loving her, he should at once tell her so plainly, and take his chance bravely, with other suitors. No lover should have the insolence to think of being accepted at once, nor should any girl have the cruelty to refuse at once; without severe reasons. If she simply doesn't like him, she may send him away for seven years or so —he vowing to live on cresses, and wear sackcloth meanwhile, or the like penance: if she likes him a little, or thinks she might come to like him in time, she may let him stay near her, putting him always on sharp trial to see what stuff he is made of, and requiring, figuratively, as many lion-skins or giants' heads as she thinks herself worth. The whole meaning and power of true courtship is Probation; and it oughtn't to be shorter than three years at least,—seven is, to my own mind, the orthodox time. And these relations between the young people should be openly and simply known, not to their friends only, but to everybody who has the least interest in them: and a girl worth anything ought to have always half-a-dozen or so of suitors under vow for her.

There are no words strong enough to express the general danger and degradation of the manners of mob-courtship, as distinct from these, which have become the fashion,—almost the law,—in modern times: when in a miserable confusion of candle-light, moonlight, and limelight—and anything but daylight, — in indecently attractive and insanely expensive dresses, in snatched moments, in hidden corners, in accidental impulses and dismal ignorances, young people smirk and ogle and whisper and whimper and sneak and stumble and flutter and fumble and blunder into what they call Love;—expect to get whatever they like the moment they fancy it, and are continually in the danger of losing all the honour of life for a folly, and all the joy of it by an accident.

Passing down now from the class of good girls who have the power, if they had the wisdom, to regulate their lives instead of losing them, to the less fortunate classes, equally good—(often, weighing their adversity in true balance, it might be conjectured, better,)—who have little power of ruling, and every provocation to misruling their fates: who have, from their births, much against them, few to help, and, virtually, none to guide,—how are we to count the annual loss of its girl-wealth to the British nation in these? Loss, and probably worse; for if there be fire and genius in these neglected ones, and they chance to have beauty also, they are apt to become to us long-running, heavy burdening, incalculable compound interest

of perdition. God save them, and all of us, at last!

But, merely taking the pocket-book red-lined balance of the matter, what, in mere cash and curricle, do these bright reverses of their best human treasures cost the economical British race, or the cheerful French? That account you would do well to cast, looking down from its Highgate upon your own mother—(of especially these sort of children?) city; or, in Paris, from the hill named, from the crowd of its Christian martyrs, Mont Martre, upon the island in Seine named 'of our Lady'—the Ile Notre Dame; or, from top of Ingleborough, on all the south and east of Lancashire and Yorkshire, black with the fume of their fever-fretted cities, rolling itself along the dales, mixed with the torrent mists. Do this piece of statistic and arithmetic *there*, taking due note that each of these great and little Babylons, if even on the creditor side you may set it down for so much (dubitable) value of produce in dynamite and bayonet, in vitriol, brass, and iron,—yet on the debtor side has to account for annual deficit *in*dubitable!—the casting away of things precious, the profanation of things pure, the pain of things capable of happiness—to what sum?

I have told you a true story of the sorrow and death of a maid whom all who knew her delighted in. I want you to read another of the sorrow and vanishing of one whom few, except her father, delighted in; and none, in any real sense, cared

for. A younger girl this, of high powers—and higher worth, as it seems to me. The story is told in absolute and simple truth by Miss Laffan, in her little grey and red book,—'Baubie Clarke.' (Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1880.) "It all happened in Edinburgh," Miss Laffan says in a private letter to me, "exactly as I relate: I went into every place in which this child was, in order to describe them and her, and I took great pains to give the dialect exactly. I remember how disappointed you were to learn that Flitters' death was not true;—this story is quite true, from first to last." I must leave my darling Baubie for a moment, to explain the above sentence with a word or two about my still better beloved Flitters, in 'Tatters, Flitters, and the Councillor.' The study of those three children, given by Miss Laffan, is, in the deepest sense, more true, as well as more pathetic, than that of Baubie Clarke,—for Miss Laffan knows and sees the children of her own country thoroughly,* but she has no clear perceptions of the Scotch. Also, the main facts concerning Tatters and Flitters and their legal adviser are all true—bitterly and brightly true: but the beautiful and heroic death was—I could find it in my heart to say, unhappily,—*not* the young girl's.

* It is curious, by the way, how totally Miss Edgeworth failed in drawing Irish *children*, though she could do English ones perfectly —and how far finer 'Simple Susan' is than 'The Orphans'— while her Irish men and women are perfect, and she is, in fact, the only classical authority in the matter of Irish character.

Flitters, when last I heard of her, was still living her life of song; such song as was possible to her. The death, so faithfully and beautifully told, was actually that of an old man, an outcast, like herself. I have no doubt Flitters could, and would, have died so, had it become her duty, and the entire harmony of the story is perfect; but it is not so sound, for my purpose here, as the pure and straightforward truth of Baubie Clarke.

I must give the rude abstract of it at once: Miss Laffan's detailed picture will not, I believe, be afterwards of less interest.

Baubie, just thirteen, lived with her father and mother, in lodgings, such as the piety of Edinburgh provides for her poor. The mother was a hopeless drunkard, her father the same—on Saturday nights, during the week carrying advertisement-boards for what stipend that kind of service obtains. Baubie, a vagrant street-singer, is the chief support and guardian both of father and mother. She is taken captive one day, at a street corner, by a passing benevolent lady; (I can't find out, and Miss Laffan is to be reprehended for this omission, if Baubie was pretty!—in her wild way, I gather—yes;) carried off to an institution of sempstresses, where she is cross-examined, with wonder and some pity; but found to be an independent British subject, whose liberties, at that moment, cannot be infringed. But a day or two afterwards, her father coming to grief, somehow, and getting sent to prison for two months, the magistrate very properly takes upon

him the responsibility of committing Baubie, in the meantime, to Miss Mackenzie's care. (I forget what becomes of the mother.)

She is taken into a charitable, religious, and extremely well-regulated institution; she is washed and combed properly, and bears the operation like a courageous poodle; obeys afterwards what orders are given her patiently and duly. To her much surprise and discontent, her singing, the chief pleasure and faculty of her existence, is at once stopped, under penalties. And, while she stays in the institution, she makes no farther attempt to sing.

But from the instant she heard her father's sentence in the police court, she has counted days and hours. A perfect little keeper of accounts she is: the Judgment Angel himself, we may not doubt, approving and assisting, so far as needful. She knows the day and the hour by the Tron church, at which her father, thinking himself daughterless, will be thrust out, wistful, from his prison gate. She is only fearful, prudently and beautifully self-distrusting, of missing count of a day.

In the dormitory of her institution, on an unregarded shutter, in the shade, morning after morning she cuts her punctual notch.

And the weary sixty days pass by. The notches are counted true to the last,—and on the last night, her measures all taken, and her points and methods of attack all planned, she opens the window-sash silently, leaps down into the flowerless garden,

climbs its wall, cat-like,—Lioness-like,—and flies into Edinburgh before the morning light. And at noon, her father, faltering through the prison gate, finds her sitting on its step waiting for him.

And they two leave Edinburgh together, and are seen—never more.

On the cover of the book which tells you this ower-true Scots novel, there is a rude woodcut of Baubie, with a background consisting of a bit of a theatre, an entire policeman, and the advertisement window of a tavern,—with tacit implication that, according to the benevolent people of Edinburgh, all the mischief they contend with is in theatres, as against chapels; taverns, as against coffee-shops; and police, as against universal Scripture-readers.

Partly, this is true,—in the much greater part it is untrue;—and all through 'Fors' you will find the contrary statement that theatres should be pious places; taverns, holy places, and policemen an irresistibly benevolent power: which, indeed, they mostly *are* already; and what London crossings and cart-drivings would be without them we all know. But I can write no more on these matters myself, in this Fors, and must be content to quote the following extremely beautiful and practical suggestion by Sir John Ellesmere, and so, for to-day, end.

"I don't care much about music myself. Indeed, I often wonder at the sort of passionate delight which

Milverton, and people like him, have in the tinkling of cymbals; but I suppose that their professions of delight are sincere. I proposed to a grave statesman, who looked daggers at me for the proposal, that the surplus of the Irish Church revenues should be devoted to giving opera-boxes to poor people who are very fond of music. What are you all giggling at? I'll bet any money that that surplus will not be half so well employed. Dear old Peabody used to send orders for opera-boxes to poor friends. I was once present when one of these orders arrived for a poor family devoted to music; and I declare I have seldom seen such joy manifested by any human beings. I don't mind telling you that since that time, I have sometimes done something of the same kind myself. Very wrong, of course, for I ought to have given the money to a hospital."

LETTER XCI

DUST OF GOLD

September, 1883.

I HAVE received several letters from young correspondents, complaining that I attach too much importance to beauty in women, and asking, "What are plain girls to do?"—one of them putting this farther question, not easy of answer, "Why beauty is so often given to girls who have only the mind to misuse it, and not to others, who would hold it as a power for God's service?" To which question, however, it is to be answered, in the first place, that the mystery is quite as great in the bestowal of

riches and wit; in the second place, that the girls who misuse their beauty, only do it because they have not been taught better, and it is much more other people's fault than theirs; in the third place, that the privilege of seeing beauty is quite as rare a one as that of possessing it, and far more fatally misused.

The question, "What are plain girls to do?" requires us first to understand clearly what "plainness" is. No girl who is well bred, kind, and modest, is ever offensively plain; all real deformity means want of manners, or of heart. I may say, in defence of my own constant praise of beauty, that I do not attach half the real importance to it which is assumed in ordinary fiction;—above all, in the pages of the periodical which best represents, as a whole, the public mind of England. As a rule, throughout the whole seventy-volume series of *Punch*,—first by Leech and then by Du Maurier,—all nice girls are represented as pretty; all nice women, as both pretty and well dressed; and if the reader will compare a sufficient number of examples extending over a series of years, he will find the moral lesson more and more enforced by this most popular authority, that all real ugliness in either sex means some kind of hardness of heart, or vulgarity of education. The ugliest man, for all in all, in *Punch* is Sir Gorgius Midas,—the ugliest women, those who are unwilling to be old. Generally speaking, indeed, *Punch* is cruel to women above a certain age; but this is the expression of a real truth in modern England, that

the ordinary habits of life and modes of education produce great plainness of *mind* in middle-aged women.

I recollect three examples in the course of only the last four or five months of railway travelling. The most interesting and curious one was a young woman evidently of good mercantile position, who came into the carriage with her brother out of one of the manufacturing districts. Both of them gave me the idea of being amiable in disposition, and fairly clever, perhaps a little above the average in natural talent; while the sister had good features, and was not much over thirty. But the face was fixed in an iron hardness, and keenly active incapacity of any deep feeling or subtle thought, which pained me almost as much as a physical disease would have done; and it was an extreme relief to me when she left the carriage. Another type, pure cockney, got in one day at Paddington, a girl of the lower middle class, round-headed, and with the most profound and sullen expression of discontent, complicated with ill-temper, that I ever saw on human features:—I could not at first be certain how far this expression was innate, and how far superinduced; but she presently answered the question by tearing open the paper she had bought with the edge of her hand into jags half an inch deep, all the way across.

The third, a far more common type, was of self-possessed and all-engrossing selfishness, complicated with stupidity;—a middle-aged woman with a novel,

who put up her window and pulled down both blinds (side and central) the moment she got in, and read her novel till she fell asleep over it: presenting in that condition one of the most stolidly disagreeable countenances which could be shaped out of organic clay.

In both these latter cases, as in those of the girls described in Fors, vol. i. p. 398–400, the offensiveness of feature implied, for one thing, a constant vexation, and *diffused* agony or misery, endured through every moment of conscious life, together with total dulness of sensation respecting delightful and beautiful things, summed in the passage just referred to as "*tortured* indolence, and *infidel* eyes," and given there as an example of "life negative, under the curse," the state of condemnation which begins in this world, and separately affects every living member of the body; the opposite state of life, under blessing, being represented by the Venice-imagined beauty of St. Ursula, in whose countenance what beauty there may be found (I have known several people who saw none, and indeed Carpaccio has gifted her with no dazzling comeliness) depends mainly on the opposite character of *diffused* joy, and ecstasy in peace.

And in places far too many to indicate, both of Fors and my Oxford lectures, I have spoken again and again of this radiant expression of cheerfulness, as a primal element of Beauty, quoting Chaucer largely on the matter; and clinching all, somewhere, (I can't look for the place now,) by saying

that the wickedness of any nation might be briefly measured by observing how far it had made its girls miserable.

I meant this quality of cheerfulness to be included above, in the word "well-bred," meaning original purity of race (Chaucer's "debonnaireté") disciplined in courtesy, and the exercises which develop animal power and spirit. I do not in the least mean to limit the word to aristocratic birth and education. Gotthelf's Swiss heroine, Freneli, to whom I have dedicated, in Proserpina, the pansy of the Wengern Alp, is only a farm-servant; and Scott's Jeanie Deans is of the same type in Scotland. And among virtuous nations, or the portions of them who remain virtuous, as the Tyrolese and Bavarian peasants, the Tuscans (of whom I am happily enabled to give soon some true biography and portraiture), and the mountain and sea-shore races of France, England, Scotland, and Ireland, almost everybody is "well-bred," and the girlish beauty universal. Here in Coniston it is almost impossible to meet a child whom it is not a real sorrow again to lose sight of. So that the second article of St. George's creed, "I believe in the nobleness of human nature," may properly be considered as involving the farther though minor belief in the loveliness of the human form; and in my next course of work at Oxford, I shall have occasion to insist at some length on the reality and frequency of beauty in ordinary life, as it has been shown us by the popular art of our own day. This frequency

of it, however, supposing we admit the fact, in no wise diminishes the burden to be sustained by girls who are conscious of possessing less than these ordinary claims to admiration; nor am I in the least minded to recommend the redemption of their loneliness by any more than common effort to be good or wise. On the contrary, the prettier a girl is, the more it becomes her duty to try to be good; and little can be hoped of attempts to cultivate the understanding, which have only been provoked by a jealous vanity. The real and effective sources of consolation will be found in the quite opposite direction, of self-forgetfulness;—in the cultivation of sympathy with others, and in turning the attention and the heart to the daily pleasures open to every young creature born into this marvellous universe. The landscape of the lover's journey may indeed be invested with ætherial colours, and his steps be measured to heavenly tunes unheard of other ears; but there is no sense, because these selfish and temporary raptures are denied to us, in refusing to see the sunshine on the river, or hear the lark's song in the sky. To some of my young readers, the saying may seem a hard one; but they may rest assured that the safest and purest joys of human life rebuke the violence of its passions; that they are obtainable without anxiety, and memorable without regret.

Having, therefore, this faith, or more justly speaking, this experience and certainty, touching the frequency of pleasing feature in well-bred and

modest girls, I did not use the phrase in last Fors, which gave (as I hear) great offence to some feminine readers, "a girl *worth* anything," exclusively, or even chiefly, with respect to attractions of person; but very deeply and solemnly in the full sense of worthiness, or (regarding the range of its influence) All-worthiness, which qualifies a girl to be the ruling Sophia of an all-worthy workman, yeoman, squire, duke, king, or Caliph;—not to calculate the advance which, doubtless, the luxury of Mayfair and the learning of Girton must have made since the days when it was written of Koot el Kuloob, or Enees el Jelees, that "the sum of ten thousand pieces of gold doth not equal the cost of the chickens which she hath eaten, and the dresses which she hath bestowed on her teachers; for she hath learned writing, and grammar, and lexicology, and the interpretation of the Koran, and the fundamentals of law, and religion, and medicine, and the computation of the Calendar, and the art of playing upon musical instruments,"*—not calculating, I say, any of these singular powers or preciousnesses, but only thinking of the constant value generalized among the King's verses, by that notable one, "Every wise woman buildeth her house; but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands,"—and seeing that our present modes of thought and elements of education are not always so arranged as to foster to their utmost the graces

* 'Arabian Nights,' Lane's translation, i. 392.

of prudence and economy in woman, it was surely no over-estimate of the desirableness of any real housebuilder among girls, that she should have five or six suitors at once under vow for her? Vow, surely also of no oppressive or extravagant nature! I said nothing of such an one as was required by Portia's father of *her* suitors, and which many a lover instinctively makes, in his own bosom,—"her, or none." I said nothing of any oath of allegiance preventing the freedom of farther search or choice; —but only the promise of the youth that, until he saw one better worth winning, he would faithfully obey his chosen mistress's will in all things; and suffer such test as she chose to put him to: it being understood that at any time he had the power as openly to withdraw as he had openly accepted the candidature.

The position of Waverley towards Flora MacIvor, of Lord Evandale to Miss Bellenden, of Lovel to Miss Wardour, Tressilian to Amy Robsart, or Quentin Durward to the Countess Isabel, are all in various ways illustrative of this form of fidelity in more or less hopeless endeavour: while also the frankness of confession is assumed both by Miss Edgeworth and Richardson, as by Shakespeare, quite to the point of entire publicity in the social circle of the lovers.* And I am grieved to say

* See the decision of Miss Broadhurst in the thirteenth chapter of the "Absentee"; and the courtships to Harriet Byron, *passim*. The relations of France to Cordelia, of Henry V. to the Princess Katharine, and of the Duke to Olivia, are enough to name among the many instances in Shakespeare.

that the casual observations which have come to my ears, since last Fors appeared, as to the absurdity and impossibility of such devotion, only further prove to me what I have long since perceived, that very few young people, brought up on modern principles, have ever felt love, or even know what it means, except under the conditions in which it is also possible to the lower animals. I could easily prove this, if it were apposite to my immediate purpose, and if the subject were not too painful, by the evidence given me in a single evening, during which I watched the enthusiastic acceptance by an English audience of Salvini's frightful, and radically false, interpretation of Othello.

Were I to yield, as I was wont in the first series of these letters, without scruple, to the eddies of thought which turned the main stream of my discourse into apparently irrelevant, and certainly unprogressive inlets, I should in this place proceed to show how true-love is inconsistent with railways, with joint-stock banks, with the landed interest, with parliamentary interest, with grouse shooting, with lawn tennis, with monthly magazines, spring fashions, and Christmas cards. But I am resolute now to explain myself in one place before becoming enigmatic in another, and keep to my one point until I have more or less collected what has been said about it in former letters. And thus continuing to insist at present only on the worth or price of womanhood itself, and of the value of feminine creatures in the economy of a state, I must ask the

reader to look back to Vol. I. (Letter IV., p. 67), where I lament my own poverty in not being able to buy a white girl of (in jeweller's language) good lustre and facetting; as in another place I in like manner bewail the present order of society in that I cannot make a raid on my neighbour's house, and carry off three graceful captives at a time; and in one of the quite most important pieces of all the book, or of any of my books, the essential nature of real property in general is illustrated by that of the two primary articles of a man's wealth, Wife, and Home; and the meaning of the word "mine," said to be only known in its depth by any man with reference to the first. And here, for further, and in its sufficiency I hope it may be received as a final, illustration, read the last lines (for I suppose the terminal lines can only be received as epilogue) of the play by which, in all the compass of literature, the beauty of pure youth has been chiefly honoured; there are points in it deserving notice besides the one needful to my purpose:—

Prince. "Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!
See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That Heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen:—all are punish'd.
Cap. O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.
Mont. But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;

That while Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set,
As that of true and faithful Juliet.
Cap. As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity."

I do not know if in the tumultuous renderings and reckless abridgements of this play on the modern stage, the audience at any theatre is ever led to think of the meaning of the Prince's saying, "That Heaven finds means to *kill your joys with love*." Yet in that one line is the key of Christian theology and of wise natural philosophy; the knowledge of the law that binds the yoke of inauspicious stars, and ordains the slumber of world-wearied flesh.

Look back to Friar Laurence's rebuke of the parent's grief at Juliet's death,—

"Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now Heaven hath all";

and you will find, in the concluding lines, not only the interpretation of the Prince's meaning, but a clear light thrown on a question lately, in some one of our critical magazines, more pertinently asked than intelligently answered—"Why Shakespeare wrote tragedies?" One of my chief reasons for withdrawing from the later edition of "Sesame and Lilies" the closing lecture, on the "Mystery of Life," was the feeling that I had not with enough care examined the spirit of faith in God, and hope in Futurity, which, though unexpressed, were meant by the master of tragedy to be felt by the spectator,

what they were to himself, the solution and consolation of all the wonderfulness of sorrow;—a faith for the most part, as I have just said, unexpressed; but here summed in a single line, which explains the instinctive fastening of the heart on the great poetic stories of grief,—

"For Nature's tears are Reason's merriment."

Returning to the terminal passage of the play, may I now ask the reader to meditate on the alchemy of fate, which changes the youth and girl into two golden statues? Admit the gain in its completeness; suppose that the gold had indeed been given down, like Danaë's from heaven, in exchange for them; imagine, if you will, the perfectest art-skill of Bezaleel or Aholiab lavished on the imperishable treasures. Verona is richer, is she, by so much bullion? Italy, by so much art? Old Montague and Capulet have their boy's and girl's "worth" in gold, have they? And though for every boy and girl whom now you exile from the gold of English harvest and the ruby of Scottish heath, there return to you, O loving friends, their corpses' weight, and more, in Californian sand,—is your bargain with God's bounty wholly to your mind? or if so, think you that it is to His, also?

Yet I will not enter here into any debate of loss by exile, and national ostracism of our strongest. I keep to the estimate only of our loss by helpless, reckless, needless death, the enduring torture at the bolted

theatre door of the world, and on the staircase it has smoothed to Avernus.

'Loss of life'! By the ship overwhelmed in the river, shattered on the sea; by the mine's blast, the earthquake's burial—you mourn for the multitude slain. You cheer the life boat's crew: you hear, with praise and joy, of the rescue of one still breathing body more at the pit's mouth:—and all the while, for one soul that is saved from the momentary passing away (according to your creed, to be with its God), the lost souls, yet locked in their polluted flesh, haunt, with worse than ghosts, the shadows of your churches, and the corners of your streets; and your weary children watch, with no memory of Jerusalem, and no hope of return from *their* captivity, the weltering to the sea of your Waters of Babylon.

LETTER XCII

ASHESTIEL

ABBOTSFORD, *September 26th*, 1883.

I CAN never hear the whispering and sighing of the Tweed among his pebbles, but it brings back to me the song of my nurse, as we used to cross by Coldstream Bridge, from the south, in our happy days.

> "For Scotland, my darling, lies full in my view,
> With her barefooted lassies, and mountains so blue."

Those two possessions, you perceive, my poor Euryclea felt to be the chief wealth of Scotland, and meant the epithet 'barefooted' to be one of praise.

In the two days that have passed since I this time crossed the Border, I have seen but one barefooted lassie, and she not willingly so,—but many high-heeled ones:—who willingly, if they might, would have been heeled yet higher. And perhaps few, even of better minded Scots maidens, remember, with any due admiration, that the greater part of Jeanie Deans' walk to London was done barefoot, the days of such pilgrimage being now, in the hope of Scotland, for ever past; and she, by help of the

high chimneys built beside Holyrood and Melrose, will henceforward obtain the beatitude of Antichrist, —Blessed be ye Rich.

Nevertheless, it is worthy of note that in the village where Bruce's heart is buried, I could yesterday find no better map of Scotland than was purchaseable for a penny,—no clear sign, to my mind, either of the country's vaster wealth, or more refined education. Still less that the spot of earth under which the king's heart lies should be indicated to the curious observer by a small white ticket, pegged into the grass; which might at first sight seem meant to mark the price of that piece of goods; and indeed, if one meditates a little on the matter, verily does so; this piece of pasteboard being nothing less than King Robert Bruce's monument and epitaph; and the devotional offering of Scotland in the nineteenth century, at his shrine. Economical, even in pasteboard, as compared with the lavish expenditure of that material by which the 'Scots wha hae,' etc., receive on all their paths of pilgrimage the recommendation of Colman's mustard.

So much, looking out on the hillside which Scott planted in his pride, and the garden he enclosed in the joy of his heart, I perceive to be the present outcome of his work in literature. Two small white tickets—one for the Bruce, the other for Michael Scott: manifold acreage of yellow tickets —for Colman's mustard. Thus may we measure the thirst for knowledge excited by modern

Scottish religion, and satisfied by modern Scottish education.

WHITHORN, *October 3rd*, 1883.

As the sum of Sir Walter's work at Melrose, so here the sum of St. Ninian's at Candida Casa, may be set down in few and sorrowful words. I notice that the children of the race who now for fifteen hundred years have been taught in this place the Word of Christ, are divided broadly into two classes: one, very bright and trim, strongly and sensibly shod and dressed, satchel on shoulder, and going to or from school by railroad; walking away, after being deposited at the small stations, in a brisk and independent manner. But up and down the earthy broadway between the desolate-looking houses which form the main street of Whithorn, as also in the space of open ground which borders the great weir and rapid of the Nith at Dumfries, I saw wistfully errant groups of altogether neglected children, barefoot enough, tattered in frock, begrimed in face, their pretty long hair wildly tangled or ruggedly matted, and the total bodies and spirits of them springing there by the wayside like its thistles,—with such care as Heaven gives to the herbs of the field,—and Heaven's Adversary to the seed on the Rock.

They are many of them Irish, the Pastor of Whithorn tells me,—the parents too poor to keep a priest, one coming over from Wigton sometimes for what ministration may be imperative. This the ending of St. Ninian's prayer and fast in his dark

sandstone cave, filled with the hollow roar of Solway,—now that fifteen hundred years of Gospel times have come and gone.

This the end: but of what is it to be the beginning? of what new Kingdom of Heaven are *these* children the nascent citizens? To what Christ are these to be allowed to come for benediction, unforbidden?

BRANTWOOD, *October* 10*th*, 1883.

The above two entries are all I could get written of things felt and seen during ten days in Scott's country, and St. Ninian's; somewhat more I must set down before the impression fades. Not irrelevantly, for it is my instant object in these resumed letters to index and enforce what I have said hitherto on early education; and while, of all countries, Scotland is that which presents the main questions relating to it in the clearest form, my personal knowledge and feelings enable me to arrange aught I have yet to say more easily with reference to the Scottish character than any other. Its analysis will enable me also to point out some specialties in the genius of Sir Walter, Burns, and Carlyle, which English readers cannot usually discern for themselves. I went into the Border country, just now, chiefly to see the house of Ashestiel: and this morning have re-read, with better insight, the chapter of Lockhart's life which gives account of the sheriff's settlement there; in which chapter there is incidental notice of Mungo Park's last days in

Scotland, to which I first pray my readers' close attention.

Mungo had been born in a cottage at Fowlsheils on the Yarrow, nearly opposite Newark Castle. He returns after his first African journey to his native cottage, where Scott visits him, and finds him on the banks of Yarrow, which in that place passes over ledges of rock, forming deep pools between them. Mungo is casting stone after stone into the pools, measuring their depths by the time the bubbles take to rise, and thinking (as he presently tells Scott) of the way he used to sound the turbid African rivers. Meditating, his friend afterwards perceives, on further travel in the distant land.

With what motive, it is important for us to know. As a discoverer—as a missionary—or to escape from ennui? He is at that time practising as a physician among his own people. A more sacred calling cannot be;—by faithful missionary service more good could be done among fair Scotch laddies in a day, than among black Hamites in a lifetime;—of discovery, precious to all humanity, more might be made among the woods and rocks of Ettrick than in the thousand leagues of desert between Atlas and red Edom. Why will he again leave his native stream?

It is clearly not mere baseness of petty vanity that moves him. There is no boastfulness in the man. "On one occasion," says Scott, "the traveller communicated to him some very remarkable adventures which had befallen him in Africa, but which he had not recorded in his book." On Scott's asking the cause

of this silence, Mungo answered that "in all cases where he had information to communicate, which he thought of importance to the public, he had stated the facts boldly, leaving it to his readers to give such credit to his statements as they might appear justly to deserve; but that he would not shock their faith, or render his travels more marvellous, by introducing circumstances which, however true, were of little or no moment, as they related solely to his own personal adventures and escapes."

Clearly it is not vanity, of Alpine-club kind, that the Old Serpent is tempting this man with. But what then? "His thoughts had always continued to be haunted with Africa." He told Scott that whenever he awoke suddenly in the night, he fancied himself still a prisoner in the tent of Ali; but when Scott expressed surprise that he should intend again to revisit those scenes, he answered that he would rather brave Africa and all its horrors, than "*wear out his life in long and toilsome rides over the hills of Scotland, for which the remuneration was hardly enough to keep soul and body together.*"

I have italicized the whole sentence, for it is a terrific one. It signifies, if you look into it, almost total absence of the instinct of personal duty,—total absence of belief in the God who chose for him his cottage birthplace, and set him his life-task beside it;—absolute want of interest in his profession, of sense for natural beauty, and of compassion for the noblest poor of his native land. And, with these absences, there is the clear presence of the fatallest of the

vices, Avarice,—in the exact form in which it was the ruin of Scott himself, the love of money for the sake of worldly position.

I have purposely placed the instinct for natural beauty, and compassion for the poor, in the same breath of the sentence;—their relation, as I hope hereafter to show, is constant. And the *total* want of compassion, in its primary root of sympathy, is shown in its naked fearsomeness in the next sentence of the tale.

"Towards the end of the autumn, Park paid Scott a farewell visit, and slept at Ashestiel. Next morning his host accompanied him homewards over the wild chain of hills between the Tweed and the Yarrow. Park talked much of his new scheme, and mentioned his determination *to tell his family that he had some business for a day or two in Edinburgh, and send them his blessing from thence without returning to take leave.*" He had married not long before a pretty and amiable woman; and when they reached the Williamhope Ridge, "the autumnal mist floating heavily and slowly down the valley of the Yarrow" presented to Scott's imagination "a striking emblem of the troubled and uncertain prospect which his undertaking afforded." He remained however unshaken, and at length they reached the spot where they had agreed to separate. A small ditch divided the moor from the road, and in going over it, Park's horse stumbled and nearly fell.

"I am afraid, Mungo," said the sheriff, "that is a

bad omen." To which he answered, smiling, "*Freits* (omens) follow those who look to them." With this expression Mungo struck the spurs into his horse, and Scott never saw him again.

"Freits follow those who look to them." Words absolutely true, (with their converse, that they cease to follow those who do *not* look to them:) of which truth I will ask the consenting reader to consider a little while.

He may perhaps think Mungo utters it in all wisdom, as already passing from the darkness and captivity of superstition into the marvellous light of secure Science and liberty of Thought. A wiser man, are we to hold Mungo, than Walter,—then? and wiser—how much more, than his forefathers?

I do not know on what authority Lockhart interprets "freit," as only meaning 'omen.' In the Douglas glossary it means 'aid,' or 'protection'; it is the word used by Jove, declaring that he will not give 'freit' from heaven either to Trojan or Rutulian; and I believe it always to have the sense of *serviceable* warning—protective, if watched and obeyed. I am not here concerned with the question how far such guidance has been, or is still, given to those who look for it; but I wish the reader to note that the form of Celtic intellect which rejected the ancient faith was certainly not a higher one than that which received it. And this I shall best show by taking the wider ground of enquiry, how far Scott's own intellect was capable of such belief,—and whether in its strength or weakness.

In the analysis of his work, given in the *Nineteenth Century* in 'Fiction, Fair and Foul,' I have accepted twelve novels as characteristic and essentially good, —naming them in the order of their production. These twelve were all written in twelve years, before he had been attacked by any illness; and of these, the first five exhibit the natural progress of his judgment and faith, in the prime years of his life, between the ages of forty-three and forty-eight.

In the first of them, 'Waverley,' the supernatural element is admitted with absolute frankness and simplicity, the death of Colonel Gardiner being foretold by the, at that time well attested, faculty of second sight,—and both the captivity and death of Fergus McIvor by the personal phantom, hostile and fatal to his house.

In the second, 'Guy Mannering,' the supernatural warning is not allowed to reach the point of actual vision. It is given by the stars, and by the strains in the thread spun at the child's birth by his gipsy guardian.

In the third, 'The Antiquary,' the supernatural influence reduces itself merely to a feverish dream, and to the terror of the last words of Elspeth of the Craigburnfoot: "I'm coming, my leddy—the staircase is as mirk as a Yule midnight."

In the fourth, 'Old Mortality,' while Scott's utmost force is given to exhibit the self-deception of religious pride, imagining itself inspired of heaven, the idea of prophetic warning is admitted as a vague

possibility, with little more of purpose than to exalt the fortitude of Claverhouse; and in the two last stories of his great time, 'Rob Roy,' and 'The Heart of Midlothian,' all suggestion whatever of the interference of any lower power than that of the Deity in the order of this world has been refused, and the circumstances of the tales are confined within the limits of absolute and known truth.

I am in the habit of placing 'The Heart of Midlothian' highest of all his works, because in this element of intellectual truth, it is the strictest and richest;—because, being thus rigid in truth, it is also the most exalted in its conception of human character;—and lastly, because it is the clearest in acknowledgment of the overruling justice of God, even to the uttermost, visiting the sin of the fathers upon the children, and purifying the forgiven spirit without the remission of its punishment.

In the recognition of these sacred laws of life it stands alone among Scott's works, and may justly be called the greatest: yet the stern advance in moral purpose which it indicates is the natural consequence of the discipline of age — not the sign of increased mental faculty. The entire range of faculty, imaginative and analytic together, is unquestionably the highest when the sense of the supernatural is most distinct,— Scott is *all himself* only in 'Waverley' and the 'Lay.'

No line of modern poetry has been oftener quoted with thoughtless acceptance than Wordsworth's

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy."

It is wholly untrue in the implied limitation; if life be led under heaven's law, the sense of heaven's nearness only deepens with advancing years, and is assured in death. But the saying is indeed true thus far, that in the dawn of virtuous life every enthusiasm and every perception may be trusted as of divine appointment; and the *maxima reverentia* is due not only to the innocence of children, but to their inspiration.

And it follows that through the ordinary course of mortal failure and misfortune, in the career of nations no less than of men, the error of their intellect, and the hardening of their hearts, may be accurately measured by their denial of spiritual power.

In the life of Scott, beyond comparison the greatest intellectual force manifested in Europe since Shakespeare, the lesson is given us with a clearness as sharp as the incision on a Greek vase. The very first mental effort for which he obtained praise was the passionate recitation of the passage in the 'Eneid,' in which the ghost of Hector appears to Eneas. And the deadliest sign of his own approaching death is in the form of incredulity which dictated to his weary hand the 'Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft.'

Here, for the present, I must leave the subject

to your own thought,—only desiring you to notice, for general guidance, the gradations of impression on the feelings of men of strong and well-rounded intellect, by which fancy rises towards faith.

I. The lowest stage is that of wilfully grotesque fancy, which is recognized as false, yet dwelt upon with delight and finished with accuracy, as the symbol or parable of what is true.

Shakespeare's Puck, and the Dwarf Goblin of the 'Lay,' are precisely alike in this first level of the imagination. Shakespeare does not believe in Bottom's translation; neither does Scott that, when the boy Buccleugh passes the drawbridge with the dwarf, the sentinel only saw a terrier and lurcher passing out. Yet both of them permit the fallacy, because they acknowledge the Elfin power in nature, to make things, sometimes for good, sometimes for harm, seem what they are not. Nearly all the grotesque sculpture of the great ages, beginning with the Greek Chimæra, has this nascent form of Faith for its impulse.

II. The ghosts and witches of Shakespeare, and the Bodach Glas and White Lady of Scott, are expressions of real belief, more or less hesitating and obscure. Scott's worldliness too early makes him deny his convictions, and in the end effaces them. But Shakespeare remains sincerely honest in his assertion of the uncomprehended spiritual presence; with this further subtle expression of his knowledge of mankind, that he never permits a spirit to show itself but to men of the highest intellectual power.

To Hamlet, to Brutus, to Macbeth, to Richard III.; but the royal Dane does not haunt his own murderer, —neither does Arthur, King John; neither Norfolk, King Richard II.; nor Tybalt, Romeo.

III. The faith of Horace in the spirit of the fountain of Brundusium, in the Faun of his hillside, and in the help of the greater gods, is constant, vital, and practical; yet in some degree still tractable by his imagination, as also that of the great poets and painters of Christian times. In Milton, the tractability is singular; he hews his gods out to his own fancy, and then believes in them; but in Giotto and Dante the art is always subjected to the true vision.

IV. The faith of the saints and prophets, rising into serenity of knowledge, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," is a state of mind of which ordinary men cannot reason; but which in the practical power of it, has always governed the world, and must for ever. No dynamite will ever be invented that can rule;—it can but dissolve and destroy. Only the Word of God and the heart of man can govern.

I have been led far, but to the saving of future time, by the examination of the difference in believing power between the mind of Scott and his unhappy friend. I now take up my immediate subject of enquiry, the effect upon Scott's own mind of the natural scenery of the native land he loved so dearly. His life, let me first point out to you, was, in all the joyful strength of it, spent in the valley of the

Tweed. Edinburgh was his school, and his office; but his home was always by Tweedside: and more perfectly so, because in three several places during the three clauses of life. You must remember also the cottage at Lasswade for the first years of marriage, and Sandy Knowe for his childhood; but, allowing to Smailholm Tower and Roslin Glen whatever collateral influence they may rightly claim over the babe and the bridegroom, the constant influences of home remain divided strictly into the three æras at Rosebank, Ashestiel, and Abbotsford.

Rosebank, on the lower Tweed, gave him his close knowledge of the district of Flodden Field: and his store of foot-traveller's interest in every glen of Ettrick, Yarrow, and Liddel-water.

The vast tract of country to which these streams owe their power is composed of a finely-grained dark and hard sandstone, whose steep beds are uniformly and simultaneously raised into masses of upland, which nowhere present any rugged or broken masses of crag, like those of our Cumberland mountains, and are rarely steep enough anywhere to break the grass by weathering; a moderate shaly—or, rather, gritty—slope of two or three hundred feet opposite Ashestiel itself, being noticeable enough, among the rounded monotony of general form, to receive the separate name of "the Slidders." Towards the bottom of a dingle, here and there, a few feet of broken bank may show what the hills consist of; but the great waves of them rise against the horizon without a single peak, crest, or cleft

to distinguish one from another, though in their true scale of mountain strength heaved into heights of 1,500 or 2,000 feet; and covering areas of three or four square leagues for each of the surges. The dark rock weathers easily into surface soil, which forms for the greater part good pasture, with interspersed patches of heath or peat, and, Liddesdaleway, rushy and sedgy moorland, good for little to man or beast.

Much rain falls over the whole district; but, for a great part of its falling time, in the softly-diffused form of Scotch mist, absorbed invisibly by the grass soil; while even the heavier rain, having to deal with broad surfaces of serenely set rock, and finding no ravines in which it can concentrate force, nor any loose lighter soil to undermine, threads its way down to the greater glens in gradual and deliberate confluence, nobody can well see how; there are no Lodores nor Bruar waters, still less Staubbachs or Giesbachs; unnoticed, by million upon million of feebly glistening streamlets, or stealthy and obscure springs, the cloudy dew descends towards the river, and the mysterious strength of its stately water rises or declines indeed, as the storm impends or passes away; yet flows for ever with a serenity of power unknown to the shores of all other mountain lands.

And the more wonderful, because the uniformity of the hill-substance renders the *slope* of the river as steady as its supply. In all other mountain channels known to me, the course of the current is here open, and there narrow—sometimes pausing in extents of

marsh cord lake, sometimes furious in rapids, precipitate in cataracts, or lost in subterranean caves. But the classic Scottish streams have had their beds laid for them, ages and ages ago, in vast accumulations of rolled shingle, which, occupying the floor of the valleys from side to side in apparent level, yet subdue themselves with a steady fall towards the sea.

As I drove from Abbotsford to Ashestiel, Tweed and Ettrick were both in flood; not dun nor wrathful, but in the clear fulness of their perfect strength; and from the bridge of Ettrick I saw the two streams join, and the Tweed for miles down the vale, and the Ettrick for miles up among his hills,—each of them, in the multitude of their windless waves, a march of infinite light, dazzling,—interminable,—intervaled indeed with eddies of shadow, but, for the most part, gliding paths of sunshine, far-swept beside the green glow of their level inches, the blessing of them, and the guard:—the stately moving of the many waters, more peaceful than their calm, only mighty, their rippled spaces fixed like orient clouds, their pools of pausing current binding the silver edges with a gloom of amber and gold; and all along their shore, beyond the sward, and the murmurous shingle, processions of dark forest, in strange majesty of sweet order, and unwounded grace of glorious age.

The house of Ashestiel itself is only three or four miles above this junction of Tweed and Ettrick.*

* I owe to the courtesy of Dr. Matthews Duncan the privilege of quiet sight both of the house and its surroundings.

It has been sorrowfully changed since Sir Walter's death, but the essential make and set of the former building can still be traced. There is more excuse for Scott's flitting to Abbotsford than I had guessed, for *this* house stands, conscious of the river rather than commanding it, on a brow of meadowy bank, falling so steeply to the water that nothing can be seen of it from the windows. Beyond, the pasture-land rises steep three or four hundred feet against the northern sky, while behind the house, south and east, the moorlands lift themselves in gradual distance to still greater height, so that virtually neither sunrise nor sunset can be seen from the deep-nested dwelling. A tricklet of stream wavers to and fro down to it from the moor, through a grove of entirely natural wood,—oak, birch, and ash, fantastic and bewildering, but nowhere gloomy or decayed, and carpeted with anemone. Between this wild avenue and the house, the old garden remains as it used to be, large, gracious, and tranquil; its high walls swept round it in a curving line like a war rampart, following the ground; the fruit-trees, trained a century since, now with grey trunks a foot wide, flattened to the wall like sheets of crag; the strong bars of their living trellis charged, when I saw them, with clusters of green-gage, soft bloomed into gold and blue; and of orange-pink magnum bonum, and crowds of ponderous pear, countless as leaves. Some open space of grass and path, now all redesigned for modern needs, must always have divided the garden from what was

properly the front of the house, where the main entrance is now, between advanced wings, of which only the westward one is of Sir Walter's time: its ground floor being the drawing-room, with his own bedroom of equal size above, cheerful and luminous both, enfilading the house front with their large side windows, which commanded the sweep of Tweed down the valley, and some high masses of Ettrick Forest beyond, this view being now mostly shut off by the opposite wing, added for symmetry! But Sir Walter saw it fair through the morning clouds when he rose, holding himself, nevertheless, altogether regardless of it, when once at work. At Ashestiel and Abbotsford alike, his work-room is strictly a writing-office, what windows they have being designed to admit the needful light, with an extremely narrow vista of the external world. Courtyard at Abbotsford, and bank of young wood beyond: nothing at Ashestiel but the green turf of the opposite fells with the sun on it, if sun there were, and silvery specks of passing sheep.

The room itself, Scott's true 'memorial' if the Scotch people had heart enough to know him, or remember, is a small parlour on the ground-floor of the north side of the house, some twelve feet deep by eleven wide; the single window little more than four feet square, or rather four feet *cube*, above the desk, which is set in the recess of the mossy wall, the light thus entering in front of the writer, and reflected a little from each side. This window is set to the left in the end wall, leaving a breadth of

some five feet or a little more on the fireplace side, where now, brought here from Abbotsford, stands the garden chair of the last days.*

Contentedly, in such space and splendour of domicile, the three great poems were written, 'Waverley' begun; and all the make and tenure of his mind confirmed, as it was to remain, or revive, through after time of vanity, trouble, and decay.

A small chamber, with a fair world outside:—such are the conditions, as far as I know or can gather, of all greatest and best mental work. At heart, the monastery cell always, changed sometimes, for special need, into the prison cell. But, as I meditate more and more closely what reply I may safely make to the now eagerly pressed questioning of my faithful scholars, what books I would have them read, I find the first broadly-swept definition may be—Books written in the country. None worth spending time on, and few that are quite safe to touch, have been written in towns.

And my next narrowing definition would be, Books that have good music in them,—that are rightly-rhythmic: a definition which includes the delicacy of perfect prose, such as Scott's; and which *ex*cludes at once a great deal of modern poetry, in which a dislocated and convulsed versification has been imposed on the ear in the attempt to express uneven temper, and unprincipled feeling.

[* It was stated shortly afterwards in the *Scotsman* that Sir Walter's study had been turned into a passage in the recent improvements.]

By unprincipled feeling, I mean whatever part of passion the writer does not clearly discern for right or wrong, and concerning which he betrays the reader's moral judgment into false sympathy or compassion. No really great writer ever does so: neither Scott, Burns, nor Byron ever waver for an instant, any more than Shakespeare himself, in their estimate of what is fit and honest, or harmful and base. Scott always punishes even error, how much more fault, to the uttermost; nor does Byron, in his most defiant and mocking moods, ever utter a syllable that defames virtue, or disguises sin.

In looking back to my former statement in the third volume of 'Modern Painters,' of the influence of natural scenery on these three men, I was unjust both to it and to them, in my fear of speaking too favourably of passions with which I had myself so strong personal sympathy. Recent Vandalism has taught me, too cruelly, and too late, the moral value of such scenes as those in which I was brought up; and given it me, for my duty to the future, to teach the Love of the fair Universe around us, as the beginning of Piety, and the end of Learning.

The reader may be interested in comparing with the description in the text, Scott's first fragmentary stanzas relating to the sources of the Tweed. Lockhart, vol. i., p. 314.

"Go sit old Cheviot's crest below,
And pensive mark the lingering snow
In all his scaurs abide,

And slow dissolving from the hill
In many a sightless soundless rill,
Feed sparkling Bowmont's tide.

"Fair shines the stream by bank and lea,
As wimpling to the eastern sea
She seeks Till's sullen bed,
Indenting deep the fatal plain,
Where Scotland's noblest, brave in vain,
Around their monarch bled.

"And westward hills on hills you see,
Even as old Ocean's mightiest sea
Heaves high her waves of foam,
Dark and snow-ridged from Cutsfeld's wold
To the proud foot of Cheviot roll'd,
Earth's mountain billows come."

LETTER XCIII

INVOCATION

Christmas, 1883.

My Christmas letter, which I have extreme satisfaction in trusting this little lady to present to you, comes first to wish the St. George's Company, and all honest men, as merry a Christmas as they can make up their minds to; (though, under present circumstances, the merriment, it seems to me, should be temperate, and the feasting moderate,)—and in the second place, to assure the St. George's Company both of its own existence, and its Master's, which, without any extreme refinement of metaphysics, the said Company might well begin to have some doubt of—seeing that there has been no report made of its business, nor record of its

additional members, nor catalogue of its additional properties, given since the—I don't know what day of—I don't know what year.

I am not going to ask pardon any more for these administrative defects, or mysterious silences, because, so far as they are results of my own carelessness or procrastination, they are unpardonable; and so far as they might deserve indulgence if explained, it could only be justified by the details, otherwise useless, of difficulty or disappointment in which more than one of our members have had their share—and of which *their* explanations might sometimes take a different shape from mine. Several have left us, whose secession grieved me; one or two, with my full consent. Others, on the contrary, have been working with their whole hearts and minds, while the Master was too ill to take note of their labour: and, owing, I believe, chiefly to that unpraised zeal, but in a measure also to the wider reading and better understanding of 'Fors' itself, new members are rapidly joining us, and, I think, all are at present animated with better and more definite hope than heretofore.

The accounts of the Company,—which, instead of encumbering 'Fors,' as they used to do, it seems to me now well to print in a separate form, to be presented to the Companions with the recommendation not to read it, but to be freely purchaseable by the public who may be curious in literature of that kind,—do not, in their present aspect, furnish a wide basis for the confidence I have just stated to be

increasing. But, in these days, that we are entirely solvent, and cannot be otherwise, since it is our principal law of business never to buy anything till we have got the money to pay for it,—that whatever we have bought, we keep, and don't try to make a bad bargain good by swindling anybody else,—that, at all events, a certain quantity of the things purchased on such terms are found to be extremely useful and agreeable possessions by a daily increasing number of students, readers, and spectators, at Sheffield and elsewhere,—and that we have at this Christmas-time of 1883 £4,000 and some odd hundreds of stock, with, besides the lands and tenements specified in my last report, conditional promise of a new and better site for the St. George's Museum at Sheffield, and of £5,000 to begin the building thereof,—these various facts and considerations do, I think, sufficiently justify the Companions of St. George in sitting down peaceful-minded, so far as regards their business matters, to their Christmas cheer; and perhaps also the Master in calling with confidence on all kind souls whom his words may reach, to augment the hitherto narrow fellowship.

Of whose nature, I must try to sum in this 'Fors' what I have had often to repeat in private letters.

First, that the St. George's Guild is not a merely sentimental association of persons who want sympathy in the general endeavour to do good. It is a body constituted for a special purpose: that of buying land, holding it inviolably, cultivating

it properly, and bringing up on it as many honest people as it will feed. It means, therefore, the continual, however slow, accumulation of landed property, and the authoritative management of the same; and every new member joining it shares all rights in that property, and has a vote for the re-election or deposition of its Master. Now, it would be entirely unjust to the Members who have contributed to the purchase of our lands, or of such funds and objects of value as we require for the support and education of the persons living on them, if the Master allowed the entrance of Members who would have equal control over the Society's property, without contributing to it. Nevertheless, I sometimes receive Companions whose temper and qualities I like, though they may be unable to help us with money, (otherwise it might be thought people had to pay for entrance,) but I can't see why there should not be plenty of people in England both able and willing to help us; whom I once more very solemnly call upon to do so, as thereby exercising the quite healthiest and straightforwardest power of Charity. They can't make the London or Paris landlords emancipate *their* poor, (even if it were according to sound law to make such an endeavour). But they can perfectly well become landlords themselves, and emancipate their *own*.

And I beg the readers alike, and the despisers of my former pleadings in this matter, to observe that all the recent agitation of the public mind, concerning the dwellings of the poor, is merely

the sudden and febrile, (Heaven be thanked, though, for such fever!) recognition of the things which I have been these twenty years trying to get recognized, and reiterating description and lamentation of—even to the actual printing of my pages blood-red—to try if I could catch the eye at least, when I could not the ear or the heart. In these letters I know not yet what accumulation of witness may be gathered,—but let the reader think, now, only what the single sentence meant which I quoted from the Evening news in the last 'Fors' I wrote before my great illness (March, 1878, Letter LXXXVII. p. 320), "The mother got impatient, *thrust the child into the snow*, and hurried on—not looking back." *There* is a Christmas card, with a picture of English 'nativity' for you—O suddenly awakened friends! And again, take this picture of what Mr. Tenniel calls John Bull guarding his Pudding, authentic from the iron-works of Tredegar, 11th February, 1878 (p. 334 of this volume): "For several months the average earnings have been six shillings a week, and out of that they have to pay for *coal*, and *house rent* and other expenses, (the rent-collector never out of *his* work), leaving very little for food or clothing. In my district there are a hundred and thirty families in distress; they have nothing but rags to cover them by day, and very little beside that wearing apparel to cover them on their beds at night,—they have sold or pawned their furniture, and everything for which they could obtain the smallest sum of

money; many of them are some days every week without anything to eat, — and with nothing but water to drink"—and *that* poisoned, probably.

Was not this, the last message I was able to bring to John Bull concerning his Pudding, enough to make him think how he might guard it better? But on first recovery of my power of speech, was not the news I brought of the state of La Belle France worth *her* taking to thought also? —"In a room two yards and a half broad by four yards and three-quarters long, a husband, wife, and four children, of whom two were dead two months afterwards,—of those left, the eldest daughter 'had still the strength to smile.' Hunger had reduced this child, who would have been beautiful, nearly to the state of a skeleton." ('Fors,' Letter LXXXVIII. p. 351, and see the sequel.)

And the double and treble horror of all this, note you well, is that, not only the tennis-playing and railroad-flying public trip round the outskirts of it, and whirl over the roofs of it,—blind and deaf; but that the persons interested in the maintenance of it have now a whole embodied Devil's militia of base littérateurs in their bound service; —the worst form of serfs that ever human souls sank into—partly conscious of their lying, partly, by dint of daily repetition, believing in their own babble, and totally occupied in every journal and penny magazine all over the world, in declaring this present state of the poor to be glorious and enviable, as compared with the poor that have been.

In which continual pother of parroquet lie, and desperately feigned defence of all things damnable, this nineteenth century stutters and shrieks alone in the story of mankind. Whatever men did before now, of fearful or fatal, they did openly. Attila does not say his horse-hoof is of velvet. Ezzelin deigns no disguise of his Paduan massacre. Prince Karl of Austria fires his red-hot balls in the top of daylight, "at stroke of noon, on the shingle roofs of the weavers of Zittau in dry July, ten thousand innocent souls shrieking in vain to Heaven and Earth, and before sunset Zittau is ashes and red-hot walls,—not Zittau, but a cinder-heap," *—but Prince Karl never says it was the best thing that could have been done for the weavers of Zittau,—and that all charitable men hereafter are to do the like for all weavers, if feasible. But your nineteenth century prince of shams and shambles, sells for his own behoof the blood and ashes, preaches, with his steam-throat, the gospel of gain from ruin, as the only true and only Divine, and fills at the same instant the air with his darkness, the earth with his cruelty, the waters with his filth, and the hearts of men with his lies.

Of which the primary and all-pestilentialest is the one formalized now into wide European faith by political economists, and bruited about, too, by frantic clergymen! that you are not to give

* Friedrich, v. 124.

alms, (any more than you are to fast, or pray), —that you are to benefit the poor entirely by your own eating and drinking, and that it is their glory and eternal praise to fill your pockets and stomach,—and themselves die, and be thankful. Concerning which falsehood, observe, whether you be Christian or not, *this* unquestionable mark it has of infinite horror, that the persons who utter it have themselves lost their *joy* in giving—cannot conceive that strange form of practical human felicity —it is more 'blessed' (not *benedictum,* but *beatum*) to give than to receive—and that the entire practical life and delight of a 'lady' is to be a 'loaf-*giver*,' as of a lord to be a land-giver. It is a degradation—forsooth—for your neighbour's child to receive a loaf, and you are pained in giving it one; your own children are not degraded in receiving their breakfast, are they? and you still have some satisfaction of a charitable nature in seeing *them* eat it? It is a degradation to a bedridden pauper to get a blanket from the Queen! how, then, shall the next bedded bride of May Fair boast of the carcanet from her?

Now, therefore, my good Companions of the Guild,—all that are, and Companions all, that are to be,—understand this, now and evermore, that you come forward to be Givers, not Receivers, in this human world: that you are to *give* your time, your thoughts, your labour, and the reward of your labour, so far as you can spare it, for the help of the poor and the needy, (they are not the same

personages, mind: the 'poor' are in constant, healthy, and accepted relations to you,—the needy, in conditions requiring change); and observe, in the second place, that you are to work, so far as circumstances admit of your doing so, with your own hands, in the production of substantial means of life—food, clothes, house, or fire—and that *only by such* labour can you either make your own living, or anybody else's. One of our lately admitted Companions wrote joyfully and proudly to me the other day that she was 'making her own living,' meaning that she was no burden to her family, but supported herself by teaching. To whom I answered, — and be the answer now generally understood by all our Companions,—that *nobody* can live by teaching, any more than by learning: that both teaching and learning are proper duties of human life, or pleasures of it, but have nothing whatever to do with the support of it.

Food can only be got out of the ground, or the air, or the sea. What you have done in fishing, fowling, digging, sowing, watering, reaping, milling, shepherding, shearing, spinning, weaving, building, carpentering, slating, coal-carrying, cooking, costermongering, and the like,—that is St. George's *work*, and means of power. All the rest is St. George's play, or his devotion—not his labour.

And the main message St. George brings to you is that *you* will not be degraded by this work nor saddened by it,—*you*, who in righteous will and modest resignation, take it upon you for your

servant-yoke, as true servants, no less than children, of your Father in Heaven; but, so far as it *does* mean an acknowledgment that you are not better than the poor, and are content to share their lowliness in that humility, you enter into the very soul and innermost good of sacred monastic life, and have the loveliness and sanctity of it, without the sorrow or the danger; separating yourselves from the world and the flesh, only in their sin and in their pain. Nor, so far as the praise of men may be good and helpful to you, and, above all, good for *them* to give you, will it ever be wanting. Do you yourself—even if you are one of these who glory in idleness—think less of Florentine Ida because she is a working girl? or esteem the feeling in which "everybody called her 'Signora'" less honourable than the crowd's stare at my lady in her carriage?

But above all, you separate yourself from the world in its sorrow. There are no chagrins so venomous as the chagrins of the idle; there are no pangs so sickening as the satieties of pleasure. Nay, the bitterest and most enduring sorrow may be borne through the burden and heat of day bravely to the due time of death, by a true worker. And, indeed, it is this very dayspring and fount of peace in the bosoms of the labouring poor which has till now rendered their oppression possible. Only the idle among *them* revolt against their state; —the brave workers die passively, young and old —and make no sign. It is for you to pity them,

for you to stand with them, for you to cherish, and save.

And be sure there are thousands upon thousands already leading such life—who are joined in no recognized fellowship, but each in their own place doing happy service to all men. Read this piece of a friend's letter, received only a day or two since, while I was just thinking what plainest examples I could give you from real life.

"I have just returned from W——, where I lived in a house of which the master was a distributor of sacks of grain, in the service of a dealer in grain, while his two daughters did, one of them the whole work of the house, including attendance on the old mother who was past work, and the other the managing of a little shop in the village,—work, with all" (father and daughters) "beginning at five a.m. I was there for some months, and was perfectly dealt with, and never saw a fault. What I wanted to tell you was that the daughter, who was an admirable cook, was conversant with her poets, quoted Wordsworth and Burns, when I led her that way, and knew all about Brantwood, as she had carefully treasured an account of it from an old Art Journal."

'*Perfectly* dealt with.' Think what praise is in those three words!—what straightforward understanding, on both sides, of true hospitality! Think, (for one of the modes of life quickest open to you—and serviceablest,)—what roadside-inns might be kept by a true Gaius and Gaia! You have perhaps held it—in far back 'Fors' one of my wildest

sayings, that every village should have, as a Holy Church at one end, a Holy Tavern at the other! I will better the saying now by adding—"they may be side by side, if you will." And then you will have entered into another mystery of monastic life, as you shall see by the plan given of a Cistercian Monastery in the second forthcoming number of 'Valle Crucis'*—where, appointed in its due place with the Church, the Scriptorium and the school, is the Hospitium for entertaining strangers unawares. And why not awares also? Judge what the delight of travelling would be, for nice travellers, (read the word 'nice' in any sense you will)—if at every village there were a Blue Boar, or a Green Dragon, or Silver Swan †—with Mark Tapley of the Dragon for Ostler—and Boots of the Swan for Boots—and Mrs. Lupin or Mrs. Lirriper for Hostess—only trained at Girton in all that becomes a Hostess in the nineteenth century! Gentle girl-readers mine, is it any excess of Christianity in you, do you think, that makes you

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* ['Mending the Sieve,' in the volume entitled 'Verona, and other Lectures,' p. 133.]

† "And should I once again, as once I may,
Visit Martigny, I will not forget
Thy hospitable roof, Marguerite de Tours,
Thy sign the Silver Swan. Heaven prosper thee."
(ROGERS' 'Italy.')

In my schools at Oxford I have placed, with Mr. Ward's beautiful copy of Turner's vignette of the old Cygne, at Martigny, my own early drawing of the corridor of its neighbour inn "La Poste,"—once itself a convent.

shrink from the notion of being such an one, instead of the Curate's wife?

My time fails me—my thoughts how much more—in trying to imagine what this sweet world will be, when the meek inherit it indeed, and the lowliness of *every* faithful handmaiden has been regarded of her Lord. For the day *will* come, the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever. Not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit—the meek shall He guide in judgment, and the meek shall He teach His way.

LETTER XCIV

RETROSPECT

BRANTWOOD, 31*st December*, 1883.

IT is a provoking sort of fault in our English language, that while one says defect, defection, and defective; retrospect, retrospection, and retrospective, etc.,—one says prospect and prospective, but not prospection; respect and respective, but not respection; perspective, but not perspect, nor perspection; præfect, but not præfection; and refection, but not refect,—with a quite different manner of difference in the uses of each admitted, or reasons for refusal of each refused, form, in every instance: and therefore I am obliged to warn my readers that

I don't mean the above title of this last 'Fors' of 1883 to be substantive, but participle;—that is to say, I don't mean that this letter will be *a* retrospect, or back-prospect, of all 'Forses' that have been; but that it will be in its own tenor, and to a limited distance, Retrospect*ive:* only I cut the 'ive' from the end of the word, because I want the retrospection to be complete as far as it reaches.

Namely, of the essential contents of the new series of 'Fors' up to the date of this letter; and in connection with them, of the First letter, the Seventeenth, and the Fiftieth, of the preceding series.

I will begin with the seventeenth letter; which bears directly on the school plan given in my report for this year. It will be seen that I struck out in that plan the three R's from among the things promised to be taught, and I wrote privately with some indignation to the Companion who had ventured to promise them, asking her whether she had never read this seventeenth letter; to which she answered that 'inspectors of schools' now required the three R's imperatively,—to which I again answered, with indignation at higher pressure, that ten millions of inspectors of schools collected on Cader Idris should not make me teach in my schools, come to them who liked, a single thing I did not choose to.

And I do not choose to teach (as usually understood) the three R's; first, because, as I *do* choose to teach the elements of music, astronomy, botany, and zoology, not only the mistresses and masters capable of teaching these should not waste their

time on the three R's; but the children themselves would have no time to spare, nor should they have. If their fathers and mothers can read and count, *they* are the people to teach reading and numbering, to earliest intelligent infancy. For orphans, or children whose fathers and mothers can't read or count, dame schools in every village (best in the almshouses, where there might be dames enow) are all that is wanted.

Secondly. I do not care that St. George's children, as a rule, should learn either reading or writing, because there are very few people in this world who get any good by either. Broadly and practically, whatever foolish people *read*, does *them* harm, and whatever they *write*, does other people harm: and nothing can ever prevent this, for a fool attracts folly as decayed meat attracts flies, and distils and assimilates it, no matter out of what book;—he can get as much out of the Bible as any other, though of course he or she usually reads only newspaper or novel.*

* Just think, for instance, of the flood of human idiotism that spent a couple of years or so of its life in writing, printing, and reading the Tichborne trial,—the whole of that vital energy and time being not only direct loss, but loss in loathsome thoughts and vulgar inquisitiveness. Had it been spent in pure silence, and prison darkness, how much better for all those creatures' souls and eyes! But, if they had been unable to read or write, and made good sailors or woodcutters, they might, instead, have prevented two-thirds of the shipwrecks on our own coast, or made a pestilential province healthy on Ganges or Amazon.

Then think farther—though which of us by any thinking can take measure?—of the pestilence of popular literature, as we

But thirdly. Even with children of good average sense,—see, for example, what happened in our own Coniston school, only the other day. I went in by chance during the hour for arithmetic; and, inserting myself on the nearest bench, learned, with the rest of the class, how much seven-and-twenty pounds of bacon would come to at ninepence farthing a pound, with sundry the like marvellous consequences of the laws of number; until, feeling myself a little shy in remaining always, though undetectedly, at the

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perceive it now accommodating itself to the tastes of an enlightened people, in chopping up its formerly loved authors—now too hard for its understanding, and too pure for its appetite—into crammed sausages, or blood-puddings swiftly gorgeable. Think of Miss Braddon's greasy mince-pie of Scott!—and buy, for subject of awed meditation, 'No 1. One penny, complete in itself' (published by Henry Vickers, 317, Strand), the Story of Oliver Twist, by Charles Dickens,—re-arranged and sublimed into Elixir of Dickens, and Otto of Oliver, and bottled in the following series of aromatic chapters, headed thus:—

Chap. I. At the Mercy of the Parish.
" II. In the Clutches of the Beadle.
" III. Among the Coffins.
" IV. Among Thieves.
" V. Fagin the Jew.
" VI. Before the 'Beak.'
" VII. Bill Sikes.
" VIII. Nancy.
" IX. Nancy Carries on.
" X. The Burglary planned.
" XI. The Burglary.
" XII. A Mysterious Stranger.
" XIII. The Murdered Girl.
" XIV. The Murderer's Flight.
" XV. The Murderer's Death.
" XVI. The Jew's Last Night Alive.

bottom of the class, I begged the master to let us all rest a little; and in this breathing interval, taking a sovereign out of my pocket, asked the children if they had ever been shown the Queen's Arms on it?

(Unanimous silence.)

"At any rate, you know what the Queen's Arms *are?*" (Not a whisper.)

"What! a roomful of English boys and girls, and nobody know what the Queen's or the King's Arms are — the Arms of England?" (Mouths mostly a little open, but with no purpose of speech. Eyes also, without any immediate object of sight.)

"Do you not even remember seeing such a thing as a harp on them?" (Fixed attention,—no response.) "Nor a lion on his hind legs? Nor three little beasts running in each corner?" (Attention dissolving into bewilderment.)

"Well, next time I come, mind, you must be able to tell me all about it;—here's the sovereign to look at, and when you've learnt it, you may divide it—if you can. How many of you are there here to-day?" (Sum in addition, taking more time than usual, owing to the difficulty of getting the figures to stand still. It is established finally that there are thirty-five.)

"And how many pence in a sovereign?" (Answer instantaneous and vociferous.)

"And thirty-fives in two hundred and forty?" (All of us at pause. The master comes to the

rescue, and recommends us to try thirties instead of thirty-fives.)

"It seems, then, if five of you will stand out, the rest can have eightpence apiece. Which of you will stand out?"

And I left *that* question for them to resolve at their leisure, seeing that it contained the essence of an examination in matters very much higher than arithmetic.

And now, suppose that there were any squire's sons or daughters down here, for Christmas, from Christchurch or Girton, who could and would accurately and explicitly tell these children "all about" the Queen's Arms: what the Irish Harp meant, and what a Bard was, and ought to be;—what the Scottish Lion meant, and how he got caged by the tressure of Charlemagne,* and who Charlemagne was;—what the English leopards meant, and who the Black Prince was, and how he reigned in Aquitaine,—would not all this be more useful, in all true senses, to the children, than being able, in two seconds quicker than children outside, to say how much twenty-seven pounds of bacon comes to at ninepence farthing a pound? And if then they could be shown, on a map, without any railroads on it,—where Aquitaine was, and Poitiers, and where Picardy, and Crecy, would it not, for children who are likely to pass their lives in Coniston, be more entertaining and

* See Fors, Letter XXV. (vol. ii. pp. 12–14).

more profitable than to learn where "New Orleans" is, (without any new Joan to be named from it), or New Jerusalem, without any new life to be lived in it?

Fourthly. Not only do the arts of literature and arithmetic continually hinder children in the *acquisition* of ideas,—but they are apt greatly to confuse and encumber the *memory* of them. Read now, with renewed care, Plato's lovely parable of Theuth and the King of Egypt (XVII. vol. i. p. 335), and observe the sentences I translated, though too feebly. "It is not medicine (to give the power) of divine memory, but a quack's drug for memorandum, leaving the memory idle." I myself, for instance, have written down memoranda of many skies, but have forgotten the skies themselves. Turner wrote nothing,—but remembered all. And this is much more true of things that depend for their beauty on sound and accent; for in the present fury of printing, bad verses, that could not be *heard* without disgust, are continually printed and read as if there was nothing wrong in them; while all the best powers of minstrel, bard and troubadour depended on the memory and voice, as distinct from writing.* All which was perfectly known to wise men ages ago, and it is continually intimated in the different forms which the myth of Hermes takes, from this Ibis Theuth of Egypt down to Correggio's most perfect picture of Mercury teaching Cupid to read;

* See lives of Beatrice and Lucia, in the first number of 'Roadside Songs of Tuscany.'

—where, if you will look at the picture wisely, you see that it really ought to be called, Mercury trying, and *failing*,* to teach Cupid to read! For, indeed, from the beginning and to the end of time, Love reads without letters, and counts without arithmetic.

But, lastly and chiefly, the personal conceit and ambition developed by reading, in minds of selfish activity, lead to the disdain of manual labour, and the desire of all sorts of unattainable things, and fill the streets with discontented and useless persons, seeking some means of living in town society by their wits. I need not enlarge on this head; every reader's experience must avow the extent and increasing plague of this fermenting imbecility, striving to make for itself what it calls a 'position in life.'

In sight, and thought of all these sources of evil in our present staples of education, I drew out the scheme of schooling, which incidentally and partially defined in various passages of 'Fors' (see mainly Letter LXVII. vol. iii. p. 374), I now sum as follows.

Every parish school to have garden, playground, and cultivable land round it, or belonging to it, spacious enough to employ the scholars in fine weather mostly out of doors.

Attached to the building, a children's library, in which the scholars who *care* to read may learn that

* Sir Joshua, with less refinement, gives the same meaning to the myth, in his picture of Cupid pouting and recusant, on being required to decipher the word, "pinmoney."

art as deftly as they like, by themselves, helping each other without troubling the master;—a sufficient laboratory always, in which shall be specimens of all common elements of natural substances, and where simple chemical, optical, and pneumatic experiments may be shown; and according to the size and importance of the school, attached workshops, many or few,—but always a carpenter's, and first of those added in the better schools, a potter's.

In the school itself, the things taught will be music, geometry, astronomy, botany, zoology, to all; drawing, and history, to children who have gift for either. And finally, to all children of whatever gift, grade, or age, the laws of Honour, the habit of Truth, the Virtue of Humility, and the Happiness of Love.

I say, the "virtue of Humility," as including all the habits of Obedience and instincts of Reverence which are dwelt on throughout 'Fors,' and all my other books*—but the things included are of course the primary ones to be taught, and the thirteenth

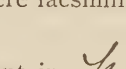
* Compare especially 'Crown of Wild Olive,' § 144 to end of Lecture IV. I repeat emphatically the opening sentence—"Educate, or Govern,—they are one and the same word. Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know—it means teaching them to behave as they do not behave. It is not teaching the youth of England the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers, and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery and their literature to lust. It is, on the contrary, training them into the perfect exercise and kingly continence of their bodies and souls,—by kindness, by watching, by warning, by precept, and by praise,—but above all, by example."

Aphorism of that sixty-seventh letter cannot be too often repeated, that "Moral education begins in making the creature we have to educate, clean, and obedient." In after time, this "virtue of humility" is to be taught to a child chiefly by gentleness to its failures, showing it that by reason of its narrow powers, it cannot *but* fail. I have seen my old clerical master, the Rev. Thomas Dale, beating his son Tom hard over the head with the edge of a grammar, because Tom could not construe a Latin verse, when the rev. gentleman ought only with extreme tenderness and pitifulness to have explained to Tom that—he wasn't Thomas the Rhymer.

For the definitely contrary cultivation of the vice of Pride, compare the education of Steerforth by Mr. Creakle. ('David Copperfield,' chap. vi.)

But it is to be remembered that humility can only be truly, and therefore only effectively taught, when the master is swift to recognize the special faculties of children, no less than their weaknesses, and that it is his quite highest and most noble function to discern these, and prevent their discouragement or effacement in the vulgar press for a common prize. See the beautiful story of little George, 'Friends in Council.'

Next, as to writing. A certain kind of writing, which will take from half an hour to an hour for a line, will indeed be taught—as long ago promised, in St. George's Schools; examples being given of the manner of it at p. 318 of vol. i., and vol. iii.,

p. 310; but, so far from qualifying the pupil for immediately taking a lucrative clerkship in a Government office, or a county banking-house, or a solicitor's ante-room, the entire aim of our training will be to *dis*qualify him, for ever, from writing with any degree of current speed; and especially from producing any such æschrography, (as everybody writes Greek-English nowadays, I use this term in order more clearly to explain myself,) as the entry in my own Banker's book facsimiled at p. 240, vol. iii., and the 'Dec.' for December here facsimiled from a London tradesman's bill just sent in,  or the ornamental R engrossed on my Father's executor's articles of release, engraved at p. 314 of vol. i.; but to compel him, on the contrary, to write whatever words deserve to be written in the most perfect and graceful and legible manner possible to his hand.

And in this resolution, stated long since, I am now more fixed than ever; having had much experience lately of handwriting, and finding, first, that the scholar who among my friends does the *most* as well as the best work, writes the most deliberately beautiful hand: and that all the hands of sensible people agree in being merely a reduction of good print to a form producible by the steady motion of a pen, and are therefore always round, and extremely upright, becoming more or less picturesque according to the humour of the writer, but

never slurred into any unbecoming speed, nor subdued by any merely mechanical habit,* whereas the writing of foolish people is almost always mechanically monotonous; and that of begging-letter writers, with rare exception, much sloped, and sharp at the turns.

It will be the law of our schools, therefore, that the children who want to write clerk's and begging-letter hands, must learn them at home; and will not be troubled by *us* to write at all. The children who want to write like gentlemen and ladies, (like St. Jerome, or Queen Elizabeth, for instance,) will learn, as aforesaid, with extreme slowness. And, if you will now read carefully the fiftieth letter, above referred to, you will find much to meditate upon, respecting home as well as school teaching; more especially the home-teaching of the mining districts (p. 30), and the home library of cheap printing, with the small value of it to little Agnes (p. 23). And as it chances —for I have no more time for retrospect in this letter —I will close it with the record of a lesson received again in Agnes's cottage, last week. Her mother died three years ago; and Agnes, and her sister Isabel, are at service:—another family is

* Sir Walter's hand, from the enormous quantity and constancy of his labour, becomes almost mechanical in its steadiness, on the pages of his novels; but is quite free in his letters. Sir Joshua's hand is curiously slovenly; Tintoret's, grotesque and irregular in the extreme; Nelson's, almost a perfect type: especially in the point of not hurrying, see facsimile just before Trafalgar, 'Fors,' vol. iii., p. 334. William the Conqueror and his queen Matilda could only sign a cross for their names.

in the cottage—and another little girl, younger than Agnes, "Jane Anne," who has two elder brothers, and one little one. The family have been about a year there, beginning farmer's life, after miner's, with much ill-fortune, the last stroke of which was the carrying away of the entire roof of their grange, at midnight, by the gale of 11th December, the timbers of it thundering and splintering over the roof of the dwelling-house. The little girl was so terrified that she had a succession of fainting fits next day, and was sent for a week to Barrow, for change of scene. When I went up on Wednesday last to see how things were going on, she had come back that morning, and was sitting with her child-brother on her lap, in the corner by the fireside. I stayed talking to the mother for half an hour, and all that time the younger child was so quiet that I thought it must be ill; but, on my asking,—"Not he," the mother said, "but he's been jumping about all the morning, and making such a fuss about getting his sister back, that now he's not able to stir."

But the dearest child of the cottage was not there.

Last spring they had a little boy, between these two, full of intelligent life, and pearl of chief price to them. He went down to the field by the brookside (Beck Leven), one bright morning when his elder brother was mowing. The child came up behind without speaking; and the back sweep of the scythe caught the leg, and divided a vein. His brother carried him up to the house; and what swift binding

could do was done—the doctor, three miles away, coming as soon as might be, arranged all for the best, and the child lay pale and quiet till the evening, speaking sometimes a little to his father and mother. But at six in the evening he began to sing. Sang on, clearer and clearer, all through the night,—so clear at last, you might have heard him, his mother said, "far out on the moor there." Sang on till the full light of morning, and so passed away.

"Did he sing with words?" I asked.

"Oh, yes; just the bits of hymns he had learnt at the Sunday-school."

So much of his education finally available to him, you observe.

Not the multiplication table *then*, nor catechism then, nor commandments then,—these rhymes only remained to him for his last happiness.

"Happiness in delirium only," say you?

All true love, all true wisdom, and all true knowledge, seem so to the world: but, without question, the forms of weakness of body preceding death, or those during life which are like them, are the testing states, often the strongest states, of the soul. The "Oh, I could prophesy!" of Harry Percy, is neither dream, nor delirium.

And the lesson I received from that cottage history, and which I would learn with my readers, is of the power for good in what, rightly chosen, has been rightly learned by heart at school, whether it show at the time or not. The hymn may be forgotten in the playground, or ineffective afterwards in restraining

contrary habits of feeling and life. But all that is good and right retains its unfelt authority; and the main change which I would endeavour to effect in ordinary school discipline is to make the pupils read less, and remember more; exercising them in committing to memory, not by painful effort, but by patient repetition, until they cannot but remember, (and observing always that the accentuation is right, —for if *that* be once right, the understanding will come in due time), helping farther with whatever elementary music, both of chant and instrument, may be familiarly attainable. To which end, may I modestly recommend all musical clergymen, and churchwardens, to dispense—if funds are limited—with organs in the church, in favour of harp, harpsichord, zittern, or peal of bells, in the schoolroom: and to endeavour generally to make the parish enjoy *proper* music out of the church as well as in it, and on Saturday as well as Sunday.

I hope to persevere in these summaries through next letter; meantime, this curiously apposite passage in one received this morning, from a much valued Companion, needs instant answer (she is the second tutress in a school for young girls, which has been lately begun by a German lady, who is resolved to allow no 'cramming'):—

"We have nineteen pupils now, and more are promised. The children are all progressing satisfactorily, and seem happy, but our path will be up-hill for some time to come. Sewing is in a very backward condition; the children think it would be better done in the machine.

Hardly any of them can write, and we can't get any decent large-hand copy-books. And they don't like poetry! What is to be done with such matter-of-fact young persons? On the other hand, they are loveable and intelligent children, much interested in the garden (they are to have little gardens of their own when the spring comes) and the birds. *Birds*, you observe, not merely sparrows; for though we are only on the edge of the Liverpool smoke we have plenty of robins and starlings, besides one tomtit, and a visit from a chaffinch the other day. We have not been able to begin the cookery class yet, for we are not actually living at the school; we hope to take up our abode there next term. Mrs. Green, my 'principal.'—I don't see why I shouldn't say mistress, I like the word much better,—*could* teach spinning if she had a wheel, only then people would say we were insane, and take the children away from us.

"I am very much obliged for last 'Fors,' and delighted to hear that there is a new one nearly ready. But would you please be a little bit more explicit on the subject of 'work' and 'ladyhood.' Not that what you have said already seems obscure to me, but people disagree as to the interpretation of it. The other night I proposed to a few fellow-disciples that we should make an effort to put ourselves in serviceable relationship to some few of our fellow-creatures, and they told me that 'all that was the landlord's business or the capitalist's.' Rather disheartening, to a person who has no hope of ever becoming a landlord or capitalist."

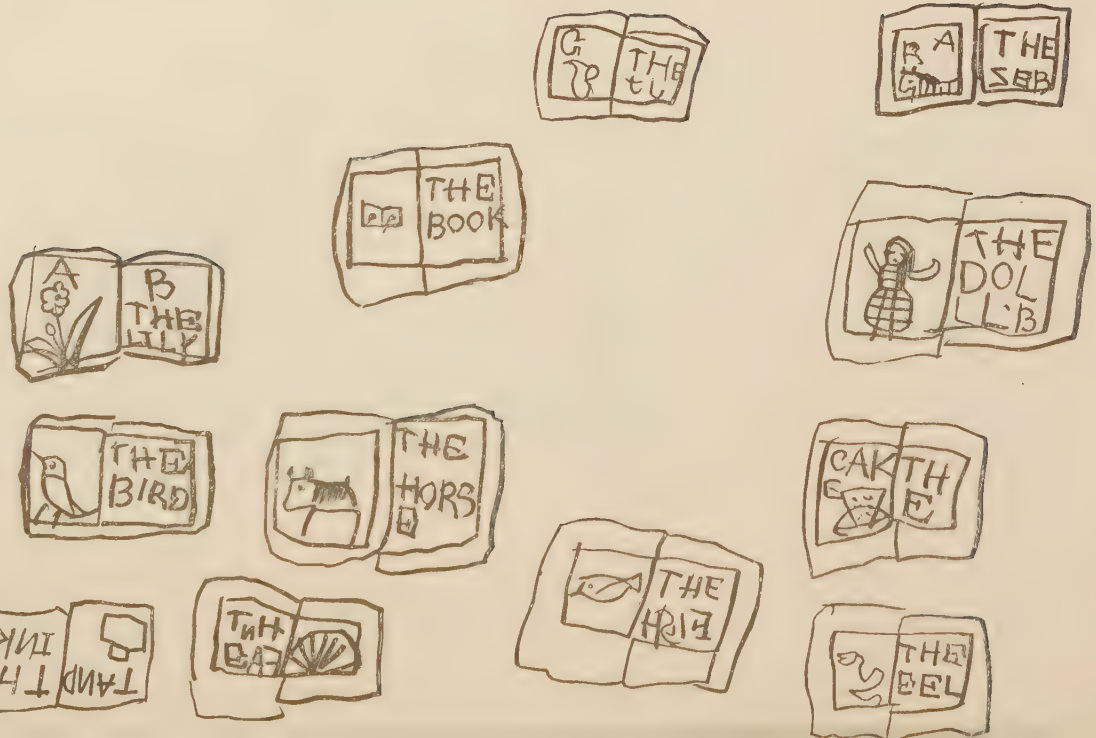
Yes, my dear, and very finely the Landlord and Capitalist—in the sense these people use the words—of land-taxer and labour-taxer, have done that business of theirs hitherto! Land and labour appear

to be discovering—and rather fast now-a-days—that perhaps they might get along by themselves, if they were to try. Of that, more next letter;—for the answers to your main questions in this,—the sewing is a serious one. The 'little wretches'—(this is a well-trained young lady's expression, not mine—interjectional on my reading the passage to her) must be got out of all that as soon as you can. For plain work, get Miss Stanley's book, which gives you the elements of this work at Whitelands,—(I hope, however, to get Miss Greenaway to sketch us a pattern frock or two, instead of the trimmed water-butts of Miss Stanley's present diagrams)—and for fine work, make them every one sew a proper sampler, with plenty of robins in it, and your visitors the tomtit and chaffinch, and any motto they like in illuminated letters, finished with gold thread,—the ground, silk. Then, for my meaning as to women's work, what *should* I mean, but scrubbing furniture, dusting walls, sweeping floors, making the beds, washing up the crockery, ditto the children, and whipping them when they want it,—mending their clothes, cooking their dinners,—and when there are cooks more than enough, helping with the farm work, or the garden, or the dairy? Is *that* plain speaking enough? Have I not fifty times over, in season and out of season, dictated and insisted and asseverated and—what stronger word else there may be—that the essentially right life for all woman-kind is that of the Swiss Paysanne,—and given Gotthelf's Freneli for the perfect

type of it, and dedicated to her in 'Proserpina' the fairest pansy in the world, keeping only the poor little one of the sand-hills for Ophelia? But in a rougher way yet—take now the facts of such life in old Scotland, seen with Walter Scott's own eyes.

"I have often heard Scott mention some curious particulars of his first visit to the remote fastness of one of these Highland friends: but whether he told the story of Invernahyle, or of one of his own relations of the Clan Campbell, I do not recollect: I rather think the latter was the case. On reaching the brow of a bleak eminence overhanging the primitive tower and its tiny patch of cultivated ground, he found his host and three sons, and perhaps half a dozen attendant *gillies*, all stretched half asleep in their tartans upon the heath, with guns and dogs, and a profusion of game about them; while in the courtyard, far below, appeared a company of women, actively engaged in loading a cart with manure. The stranger was not a little astonished when he discovered, on descending from the height, that among these industrious females were the laird's own lady, and two or three of her daughters; but they seemed quite unconscious of having been detected in an occupation unsuitable to their rank—retired presently to their 'bowers,' and when they reappeared in other dresses, retained no traces of their morning's work, except complexions glowing with a radiant freshness, for one evening of which many a high-bred beauty would have bartered half her diamonds. He found the young ladies not ill informed, and exceedingly agreeable; and the song and the dance seemed to form the invariable termination of their busy days."

You think such barbarism for ever past? No, my dears; it is only the barbarity of idle gentlemen that must pass. *They* will have to fill the carts—you to drive them; and never any more evade the burden and heat of the day—they, in shooting birds and each other, or you in walking about in sun-hats and parasols,—like this


THE BOOK
THE DOLL
THE BIRD
THE HORSE
THE FISH
THE EEL

LETTER XCV

FORS INFANTIÆ

October, 1884.

I DO not well know whether it has more distressed, or encouraged me, to find how much is wanting, and how much to be corrected, in the hitherto accepted modes of school education for our youngest children. Here, for the last year or two, I have had the most favourable opportunities for watching and trying various experiments on the minds of country children, most thankfully recognizing their native power; and most sorrowfully the inefficiency of the means at the schoolmaster's disposal, for its occupation and development. For the strengthening of his hands, and that of our village teachers and dames in general, I have written these following notes at

speed, for the brevity and slightness of which I must pray the reader's indulgence: he will find the substance of them has been long and deeply considered.

But first let me fulfil the pledge given in last number of 'Fors' by a few final words about the Land Question—needless, if people would read my preceding letters with any care, but useful, as a general heading of them, for those who have not time to do so.

The plan of St. George's Guild is wholly based on the supposed possession of land by hereditary proprietors, inalienably; or if by societies, under certain laws of responsibility to the State.

In common language, and in vulgar thought, the possession of land is confused with "freedom." But no man is so free as a beggar; and no man is more solemnly a servant to God, the king, and the laws of his country, than an honest land-holder.

The nonsense thought and talked about 'Nationalization of Land,' like other nonsense, must have its day, I suppose,—and I hope, soon, its night. All healthy states from the beginning of the world, living on land,* are founded on hereditary tenure, and perish when either the lords or peasants sell their estates, much more when they let them out for hire. The single line of the last words of John of Gaunt to Richard II., "Landlord of England art thou now, not King," expresses the root of the whole

* As distinct from those living by trade or piracy.

matter; and the present weakness of the Peers in their dispute with the Commons is because the Upper House is composed now no more of Seigneurs, but of Landlords.

Possession of land implies the duty of living on it, and by it, if there is enough to live on; then, having got one's own life from it by one's own labour or wise superintendence of labour, if there is more land than is enough for one's self, the duty of making it fruitful and beautiful for as many more as can live on it.

The owner of land, necessarily and justly left in a great measure by the State to do what he will with his own, is nevertheless entirely responsible to the State for the generally beneficial management of his territory; and the sale of his land, or of any portion of it, only allowed under special conditions, and with solemn public registry of the transference to another owner: above all, the landmarks by which estates are described are never to be moved.

A certain quantity of public land (some belonging to the king and signory, some to the guilds of craftsmen, some to the town or village corporations) must be set aside for public uses and pleasures, and especially for purposes of education, which, rightly comprehended, consists, half of it, in making children familiar with natural objects, and the other half in teaching the practice of piety towards them (piety meaning kindness to living things, and orderly use of the lifeless).

And throughout the various passages referring to

this subject in 'Fors,' it will be found that I always pre-suppose a certain quantity of carefully tended land to be accessible near our schools and universities, not for exercise merely, but for instruction ;—see last 'Fors,' p. 446.

Of course, schools of this kind cannot be in large towns,—the town school must be for townspeople ; but I start with the general principle that every school is to be fitted for the children in its neighbourhood who are likely to grow up and live in its neighbourhood. The idea of a general education which is to fit everybody to be Emperor of Russia, and provoke a boy, whatever he is, to want to be something better, and wherever he was born to think it a disgrace to die, is the most entirely and directly diabolic of all the countless stupidities into which the British nation has been of late betrayed by its avarice and irreligion. There are, indeed, certain elements of education which are alike necessary to the inhabitants of every spot of earth. Cleanliness, obedience, the first laws of music, mechanics, and geometry, the primary facts of geography and astronomy, and the outlines of history, should evidently be taught alike to poor and rich, to sailor and shepherd, to labourer and shopboy. But for the rest, the efficiency of any school will be found to increase exactly in the ratio of its direct adaptation to the circumstances of the children it receives ; and the quantity of knowledge to be attained in a given time being equal, its value will depend on the possibilities of its instant application. You need not

teach botany to the sons of fishermen, architecture to shepherds, or painting to colliers; still less the elegances of grammar to children who throughout the probable course of their total lives will have, or ought to have, little to say, and nothing to write.*

Farther, of schools in all places, and for all ages, the healthy working will depend on the total exclusion of the stimulus of competition in any form or disguise. Every child should be measured by its own standard, trained to its own duty, and rewarded by its just praise. It is the *effort* that deserves praise, not the success; nor is it a question for any student whether he is cleverer than others or duller, but whether he has done the best he could with the gifts he has. The madness of the modern cram and examination system arises principally out of the struggle to get lucrative places; but partly also out of the radical blockheadism of supposing that all men are naturally equal, and can only make their way by elbowing;—the facts being that every child is born with an accurately defined and absolutely limited capacity; that he is naturally (if able at all) able for some things and unable for others; that no effort and no teaching can add one particle to the granted ounces of his available

* I am at total issue with most preceptors as to the use of grammar to *any* body. In a recent examination of our Coniston school I observed that the thing the children did exactly best, was their parsing, and the thing they did exactly worst, their repetition. Could stronger proof be given that the dissection of a sentence is as bad a way to the understanding of it as the dissection of a beast to the biography of it?

brains; that by competition he may paralyse or pervert his faculties, but cannot stretch them a line; and that the entire grace, happiness, and virtue of his life depend on his contentment in doing what he can, dutifully, and in staying where he is, peaceably. So far as he regards the less or more capacity of others, his superiorities are to be used for *their* help, not for his own pre-eminence; and his inferiorities to be no ground of mortification, but of pleasure in the admiration of nobler powers. It is impossible to express the quantity of delight I used to feel in the power of Turner and Tintoret, when my own skill was nascent only; and all good artists will admit that there is far less personal pleasure in doing a thing beautifully than in seeing it beautifully done. Therefore, over the door of every school, and the gate of every college, I would fain see engraved in their marble the absolute Forbidding

μηδὲν κατὰ ἐριθείαν ἢ κενοδοξίαν:

"Let *nothing* be done through strife or vain glory:"

and I would have fixed for each age of children and students a certain standard of pass in examination, so adapted to average capacity and power of exertion, that none need fail who had attended to their lessons and obeyed their masters; while its variety of trial should yet admit of the natural distinctions attaching to progress in especial subjects and skill in peculiar arts. Beyond such indication or acknowledgment of merit, there should be neither prizes nor honours; these are meant by

Heaven to be the proper rewards of a man's consistent and kindly life, not of a youth's temporary and selfish exertion.

Nor, on the other hand, should the natural torpor of wholesome dulness be disturbed by provocations, or plagued by punishments. The wise proverb ought in every schoolmaster's mind to be deeply set—"You cannot make a silk purse of a sow's ear;" expanded with the farther scholium that the flap of it will not be the least disguised by giving it a diamond earring. If, in a woman, beauty without discretion be as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, much more, in man, woman, or child, knowledge without discretion—the knowledge which a fool receives only to puff up his stomach, and sparkle in his cockscomb. As I said,* that in matters moral, most men are not intended to be any better than sheep and robins, so, in matters intellectual, most men are not intended to be any wiser than their cocks and bulls, —duly scientific of their yard and pasture, peacefully nescient of all beyond. To be proud and strong, each in his place and work, is permitted and ordained to the simplest; but ultra,—ne sutor, ne fossor.

And it is in the wholesome indisposition of the average mind for intellectual labour that due provision is made for the quantity of dull work which must be done in stubbing the Thornaby wastes of

* Notes on the life of Santa Zita ('Songs of Tuscany,' Part II.).

the world. Modern Utopianism imagines that the world is to be stubbed by steam, and human arms and legs to be eternally idle; not perceiving that thus it would reduce man to the level of his cattle indeed, who can only graze and gore, but not dig! It is indeed certain that advancing knowledge will guide us to less painful methods of human toil; but in the true Utopia, man will rather harness himself, with his oxen, to his plough, than leave the devil to drive it.

The entire body of teaching throughout the series of 'Fors Clavigera' is one steady assertion of the necessity that educated persons should share their thoughts with the uneducated, and take also a certain part in their labours. But there is not a sentence implying that the education of all should be alike, or that there is to be no distinction of master from servant, or of scholar from clown. That education should be open to all, is as certain as that the sky should be; but, as certainly, it should be enforced on none, and benevolent Nature left to lead her children, whether men or beasts, to take or leave at their pleasure. Bring horse and man to the water, let them drink if, and when, they will;—the child who desires education will be bettered by it; the child who dislikes it, only disgraced.

Of course, I am speaking here of intellectual education, not moral. The laws of virtue and honour are, indeed, to be taught compulsorily to all men; whereas our present forms of education refuse to

teach them to any; and allow the teaching, by the persons interested in their promulgation, of the laws of cruelty and lying, until we find these British islands gradually filling with a breed of men who cheat without shame, and kill without remorse.

It is beyond the scope of the most sanguine thought to conceive how much misery and crime would be effaced from the world by persistence, even for a few years, of a system of education thus directed to raise the fittest into positions of influence, to give to every scale of intellect its natural sphere, and to every line of action its unquestioned principle. At present wise men, for the most part, are silent, and good men powerless; the senseless vociferate, and the heartless govern; while all social law and providence are dissolved by the enraged agitation of a multitude, among whom every villain has a chance of power, every simpleton of praise, and every scoundrel of fortune.

Passing now to questions of detail in the mode of organizing school instruction, I would first insist on the necessity of a sound system in elementary music. Musicians, like painters, are almost virulently determined in their efforts to abolish the laws of sincerity and purity; and to invent, each for his own glory, new modes of dissolute and lascivious sound. No greater benefit could be conferred on the upper as well as the lower classes of society than the arrangement of a grammar of simple and pure music, of which the code should be alike taught in every school in the land. My attention has been long turned to

this object, but I have never till lately had leisure to begin serious work upon it. During the last year, however, I have been making experiments with a view to the construction of an instrument by which very young children could be securely taught the relations of sound in the octave; unsuccessful only in that the form of lyre which was produced for me, after months of labour, by the British manufacturer, was as curious a creation of visible deformity as a Greek lyre was of grace, besides being nearly as expensive as a piano! For the present, therefore, not abandoning the hope of at last attaining a simple stringed instrument, I have fallen back —and I think, probably, with final good reason— on the most sacred of all musical instruments, the 'Bell.'

Whether the cattle-bell of the hills, or, from the cathedral tower, monitor of men, I believe the sweetness of its prolonged tone the most delightful and wholesome for the ear and mind of all instrumental sound. The subject is too wide to be farther dwelt on here; of experiment or progress made, account will be given in my reports to the St. George's Guild.

Next for elocution. The foundational importance of beautiful speaking has been disgraced by the confusion of it with diplomatic oratory, and evaded by the vicious notion that it can be taught by a master learned in it as a separate art. The management of the lips, tongue, and throat may, and perhaps should, be so taught; but this is

properly the first function of the singing master. Elocution is a moral faculty; and no one is fit to be the head of a children's school who is not both by nature and attention a beautiful speaker.

By attention, I say; for fine elocution means first an exquisitely close attention to, and intelligence of, the meaning of words, and perfect sympathy with what feeling they describe; but indicated always with reserve. In this reserve, fine reading and speaking, (virtually one art), differ from "recitation," which gives the statement or sentiment with the explanatory accent and gesture of an actor. In perfectly pure elocution, on the contrary, the accent ought, as a rule, to be much lighter and gentler than the natural or dramatic one, and the force of it wholly independent of gesture or expression of feature. A fine reader should read, a great speaker speak, as a judge delivers his charge; and the test of his power should be to read or speak unseen.

At least an hour of the school-day should be spent in listening to the master's or some trustworthy visitor's reading, but no children should attend unless they were really interested; the rest being allowed to go on with their other lessons or employments; a large average of children, I suppose, are able to sew or draw while they yet attend to reading, and so there might be found a fairly large audience, of whom however those who were usually busy during the lecture should not be called upon for any account of what they

had heard; but, on the contrary, blamed, if they had allowed their attention to be diverted by the reading from what they were about, to the detriment of their work. The real audience consisting of the few for whom the book had been specially chosen, should be required to give perfect and unbroken attention to what they heard; to stop the reader always at any word or sentence they did not understand, and to be prepared for casual examination on the story next day.

I say 'on the *story*,' for the reading, whether poetry or prose, should always be a story of some sort, whether true history, travels, romance, or fairy-tale. In poetry, Chaucer, Spenser, and Scott, for the upper classes, lighter ballad or fable for the lower, contain always some thread of pretty adventure. No merely didactic or descriptive books should be permitted in the reading room, but so far as they are used at all, studied in the same way as grammars; and Shakespeare, accessible always at play time in the library in small and large editions to the young and old alike, should never be used as a school book, nor even formally or continuously read aloud. He is to be known by thinking, not mouthing.

I have used, not unintentionally, the separate words 'reading room' and library. No school should be considered as organized at all, without these two rooms, rightly furnished; the reading room, with its convenient pulpit and students' desks, in good light, skylight if possible, for drawing, or

taking notes—the library with its broad tables for laying out books on, and recesses for niched reading, and plenty of lateral light kept carefully short of glare: both of them well shut off from the schoolroom or rooms, in which there must be always more or less of noise.

The Bible-reading, and often that of other books in which the text is divided into verses or stanzas, should be frequently conducted by making the children read each its separate verse in important passages, afterwards committing them to memory, —the pieces chosen for this exercise should of course be the same at all schools,—with wider scope given within certain limits for choice in profane literature: requiring for a pass, that the children should know accurately out of the passages chosen, a certain number, including not less than five hundred lines, of such poetry as would always be helpful and strengthening to them; therefore never melancholy, but didactic, or expressive of cheerful and resolute feeling.

No discipline is of more use to a child's character, with threefold bearing on intellect, memory, and morals, than the being accustomed to relate accurately what it has lately done and seen. The story of Eyes and No Eyes in 'Evenings at Home' is intended only to illustrate the difference between inattention and vigilance; but the exercise in narration is a subsequent and separate one; it is in the lucidity, completeness, and honesty of statement. Children ought to be frequently required to

give account of themselves, though always allowed reserve, if they ask: "I would rather not say, mamma," should be accepted at once with serene confidence on occasion; but of the daily walk and work the child should take pride in giving full account, if questioned; the parent or tutor closely lopping exaggeration, investigating elision, guiding into order, and aiding in expression. The finest historical style may be illustrated in the course of the narration of the events of the day.

Next, as regards arithmetic: as partly stated already in the preceding 'Fors,' p. 441, children's time should never be wasted, nor their heads troubled with it. The importance at present attached to it is a mere filthy folly, coming of the notion that every boy is to become first a banker's clerk and then a banker, —and that every woman's principal business is in checking the cook's accounts. Let children have small incomes of pence won by due labour,—they will soon find out the difference between a threepenny-piece and a fourpenny, and how many of each go to a shilling. Then, watch the way they spend their money,* and teach them patience in saving, and the sanctity of a time-honoured hoard (but for use in a day of need, not for lending at interest); so they will painlessly learn the great truth known to so few of us—that

* Not in Mrs. Pardiggle's fashion: a child ought to have a certain sum given it to give away, and a certain sum to spend for itself wisely; and it ought not to be allowed to give away its spending money. Prudence is a much more rare virtue than generosity.

two and two make four, not five. Then insist on perfect habits of order and putting-by of things; this involves continually knowing and counting how many there are. The multiplication table may be learned when they want it—a longish addition sum will always do instead; and the mere mechanism of multiplication and division and dotting and carrying can be taught by the monitors; also of fractions, as much as that $\frac{1}{2}$ means a half-penny and $\frac{1}{4}$ a farthing.*

Next for geography. There is, I suppose, no subject better taught at elementary schools; but to the pursuit of it, whether in advanced studentship or in common life, there is now an obstacle set so ludicrously insuperable, that for ordinary people it is simply an end to effort. I happen at this moment to have the first plate to finish for the 'Bible of Amiens,' giving an abstract of the features of France. I took for reduction, as of convenient size, probably containing all I wanted to reduce, the map in the 'Harrow Atlas of Modern Geography,' and found the only clearly visible and the only accurately delineated things in it, were the railroads! To begin with, there are two Mont Blancs, of which the freeborn British boy may take his choice. Written at some distance from the biggest of them, in small italics, are the words

* I heard an advanced class tormented out of its life the other day at our school to explain the difference between a numerator and denominator. I wasn't sure myself, for the minute, which was which; and supremely didn't care.

"Grand St. Bernard," which the boy cannot but suppose to refer to some distant locality; but neither of the Mont Blancs, each represented as a circular pimple, is engraved with anything like the force and shade of the Argonne hills about Bar le Duc; while the southern chain of the hills of Burgundy is similarly represented as greatly more elevated than the Jura. Neither the Rhine, Rhone, Loire, nor Seine is visible except with a lens; nor is any boundary of province to be followed by the eye; patches of feeble yellow and pale brown, dirty pink and grey, and uncertain green, melt into each other helplessly across wrigglings of infinitesimal dots; while the railways, not merely black lines, but centipede or myriapede caterpillars, break up all France, as if it were crackling clay, into senseless and shapeless divisions, in which the eye cannot distinguish from the rest even the great lines of railway themselves, nor any relative magnitudes of towns, nor even their places accurately,—the measure of nonsense and misery being filled up by a mist of multitudinous names of places never heard of, much less spoken of, by any human being ten miles out of them.

For maps of this kind, there can be no question with any reasonable human creature that, first, proper physical maps should be substituted; and secondly, proper historical ones; the diagrams of the railways being left to Bradshaw; and the fungus growths of modern commercial towns to

the sellers of maps for counting-houses. And the Geological Society should, for pure shame, neither write nor speak another word, till it has produced effectively true models to scale of the known countries of the world. These, photographed in good side light, would give all that was necessary of the proportion and distribution of mountain ranges;* and these photographs should afterwards be made the basis of beautiful engravings, giving the character of every district completely, whether arable, wooded, rocky, moor, sand, or snow, with the carefullest and clearest tracing of the sources and descent of its rivers; and, in equally careful distinction of magnitude, as stars on the celestial globe, the capitals and great provincial towns; but absolutely without names or inscriptions of any kind. The boy who cannot, except by the help of inscription, know York from Lancaster, or Rheims from Dijon, or Rome from Venice, need not be troubled to pursue his geographical studies. The keys to every map, with the names, should form part of the elementary school geography, which should be the same over the whole British Empire, and should be extremely simple and brief; concerning itself in no wise with manners and customs, number of inhabitants,

* Of the cheap barbarisms and abortions of modern cram, the frightful method of representing mountain chains by black bars is about the most ludicrous and abominable. All mountain chains are in groups, not bars, and their watersheds are often entirely removed from their points of greatest elevation.

or species of beasts, but strictly with geographical fact, completed by so much intelligible geology, as should explain whether hills were of chalk, slate, or granite, and remain mercifully silent as to whether they were Palæo- or Kaino-zoic, Permian or Silurian. The age, or ages of the world, are not of the smallest consequence either to ants or myrmidons,—either to moths or men. But the ant and man must know where the world, now existent, is soft or flinty, cultivable or quarriable.

Of course, once a system of drawing rightly made universal, the hand-colouring of these maps would be one of the drawing exercises, absolutely costless, and entirely instructive. The historical maps should also, as a matter of course, be of every county in successive centuries;—the state of things in the nineteenth century being finally simplified into a general brown fog, intensified to blackness over the manufacturing centres.

Next, in astronomy, the beginning of all is to teach the child the places and names of the stars when it can see them, and to accustom it to watch for the nightly change of those visible. The register of the visible stars of first magnitude and planets should be printed largely and intelligibly for every day of the year, and set by the schoolmaster every day; and the arc described by the sun, with its following and preceding stars, from point to point of the horizon visible at the place, should be drawn, at least weekly, as the first of the drawing exercises.

These, connected on one side with geometry, on the other with writing, should be carried at least as far, and occupy as long a time, as the exercises in music; and the relations of the two arts, and meaning of the words 'composition,' 'symmetry,' 'grace,' and 'harmony' in both, should be very early insisted upon and illustrated. For all these purposes, every school should be furnished with progressive examples, in facsimile, of beautiful illuminated writing: for nothing could be more conducive to the progress of general scholarship and taste than that the first natural instincts of clever children for the imitation or, often, the invention of picture writing, should be guided and stimulated by perfect models in their own kind.

The woodcut prefixed to this number shows very curiously what complete harmony there is between a clever child's way of teaching itself to draw and write—(and no teaching is so good for it as its own, if that can be had)—and the earliest types of beautiful national writing. The indifference as to the places of the letters, or the direction in which they are to be read, and the insertion of any that are to spare for the filling of corners or otherwise blank spaces in the picture, are exactly the modes of early writing which afterwards give rise to its most beautiful decorative arrangements —a certain delight in the dignity of enigma being always at the base of this method of ornamentation. The drawing is by the same little girl whose anxiety that her doll's dress might not hurt its

feelings has been already described in my second lecture at Oxford, on the Art of England. This fresco, executed nearly at the same time, when she was six or seven years old, may be compared by antiquarians, not without interest, with early Lombardic MSS. It needs, I think, no farther elucidation than some notice of the difficulty caused by the substitution of t for J in the title of 'The Jug,' and the reversal of the letter Z in that of 'The Zebra,' and warning not to mistake the final E of 'The Cake' for the handle of a spotted tea-cup. The most beautifully Lombardic involution is that of "The Fan," written—

T N H
E A ꟻ

Next, for zoology, I am taking the initiative in what is required myself, by directing some part of the funds of the St. George's Guild to the provision of strongly ringed frames, large enough to contain the beautiful illustrations given by Gould, Audubon, and other such naturalists; and I am cutting my best books to pieces for the filling of these frames, which can be easily passed from school to school; and I hope to prepare with speed a general text for them, totally incognisant of all quarrel or inquiry concerning species, and the origin thereof; but simply calling a hawk a hawk, and an owl an owl; and trusting to the scholars' sagacity to see the difference; but giving him all

attainable information concerning the habits and talents of every bird and beast.

Similarly in botany, for which there are quite unlimited means of illustration, in the exquisite original drawings and sketches of great botanists, now uselessly lying in inaccessible cupboards of the British Museum and other scientific institutions. But the most pressing need is for a simple handbook of the wild flowers of every country—French flowers for French children, Teuton for Teuton, Saxon for Saxon, Highland for Scot—severely accurate in outline, and exquisitely coloured by hand (again the best possible practice in our drawing schools); with a text regardless utterly of any but the most popular names, and of all microscopic observation; but teaching children the beauty of plants as they grow, and their culinary uses when gathered, and that, except for such uses, they should be left growing.

And lastly of needlework. I find among the materials of 'Fors,' thrown together long since, but never used, the following sketch of what the room of the Sheffield Museum, set apart for its illustration, was meant to contain.

"All the acicular art of nations, savage and civilized—from Lapland boot, letting in no snow water, to Turkey cushion bossed with pearl,—to valance of Venice gold in needlework,—to the counterpanes and samplers of our own lovely ancestresses—imitable, perhaps, once more, with good help from Whitelands College and Girton. It

was but yesterday my own womankind were in much wholesome and sweet excitement, delightful to behold, in the practice of some new device of remedy for Rents (to think how much of evil there is in the two senses of that four-lettered word! in the two methods of intonation of its synonym, Tear!), whereby it might be daintily effaced, and with a newness which would never make it worse. The process began—beautiful even to my uninformed eyes—in the likeness of herringbone masonry, crimson on white, but it seemed to me marvellous that anything should yet be discoverable in needle process, and that of so utilitarian character.

"All that is reasonable, I say, of such work is to be in our first Museum room; all that Athena and Penelope would approve. Nothing that vanity has invented for change, or folly loved for costliness.

"Illustrating the true nature of a thread and a needle, the structure first of wool and cotton, of fur and hair and down, hemp, flax, and silk, microscope permissible, *here*, if anything can be shown of *why* wool is soft, and fur fine, and cotton downy, and down downier; and how a flax fibre differs from a dandelion stalk, and how the substance of a mulberry leaf can become velvet for Queen Victoria's crown, and clothing of purple for the housewife of Solomon.

"Then the phase of its dyeing. What azures and emeralds and Tyrian scarlets can be got into fibres of thread!

"Then the phase of its spinning. The mystery of that divine spiral, from finest to firmest, which renders lace possible at Valenciennes;—anchorage possible, after Trafalgar, (if Hardy had done as he was bid).

"Then the mystery of weaving. The eternal harmony of warp and woof; of all manner of knotting, knitting, and reticulation; the art which makes garments possible woven from the top throughout; draughts of fishes possible, miraculous enough, always, when a pilchard or herring shoal gathers itself into companionable catchableness; —which makes, in fine, so many nations possible, and Saxon and Norman beyond the rest.

"And, finally, the accomplished phase of needlework—the 'Acu Tetigisti' of all time, which does indeed practically exhibit—what mediæval theologists vainly disputed—how many angels can stand on a needle point, directing the serviceable stitch, to draw the separate into the inseparable."

Very thankfully I can now say that this vision of thread and needlework, though written when my fancy had too much possession of me, is now being in all its branches realized by two greatly valued friends,—the spinning on the old spinning-wheel, with most happy and increasingly acknowledged results, systematized here among our Westmorland hills by Mr. Albert Fleming; the useful sewing, by Miss Stanley of Whitelands College, whose book on that subject seems to me in the text of it all that can be desired, but the diagrams of dress may

perhaps receive further consideration. For indeed the schools of all young womankind are in great need of such instruction in dressmaking as shall comply with womankind's natural instinct for self-decoration in all worthy and graceful ways, repressing in the rich their ostentation, and encouraging in the poor their wholesome pride. On which matters, vital to the comfort and happiness of every household, I may have a word or two yet to say in next 'Fors;' being content that this one should close with the subjoined extract from a letter I received lately from Francesca's mother, who, if any one, has right to be heard on the subject of education; and the rather that it is, in main purport, contrary to much that I have both believed and taught, but, falling in more genially with the temper of recent tutors and governors, may by them be gratefully acted upon, and serve also for correction of what I may have myself too servilely thought respecting the need of compulsion.

"If I have the least faculty for anything in this world, it is for teaching children, and making them good and *perfectly happy* going along. My whole principle is that no government is of the least use except self-government, and the worst children will do right, if told which is right and wrong, and that they must act for themselves. Then I have a fashion, told me by a friend when Francesca was a baby; which is this,—*never see evil, but praise good;* for instance, if children are untidy, do not find fault, or appear to notice it, but the first time possible, praise them for being neat and fresh, and they will soon become so. I

dare say you can account for this, I cannot; but I have tried it many times, and have never known it fail. I have other ideas, but you might not approve of them,—the religious instruction I limited to paying my little friends for learning Dr. Watts' "Though I'm now in younger days," but I suppose *that*, like my system generally, is hopelessly old fashioned. Very young children can learn this verse from it :—

> "'I'll not willingly offend,
> Nor be easily offended;
> What's amiss I'll strive to mend,
> And endure what can't be mended.'

There was an old American sea captain who said he had been many times round the world comfortably by the help of this verse."

LETTER XCVI. (TERMINAL.)

ROSY VALE

Christmas, 1884.

"ST. DAVID, having built a monastery near Menevia, which is from him since called St. David's, in a place called the Rosy Valley, (Vallis Rosina,) gave this strict rule of monastical profession,—'That every monk should labour daily with his hands for the common good of the Monastery, according to the Apostle's saying, He that doth not labour, let him not eat. For those who spend their time in idleness debase their minds, which become unstable, and bring forth impure thoughts, which restlessly disquiet them.' The monks there *refused all gifts or possessions offered by unjust men; they detested riches;* they had no care to ease their labour by the use of oxen or other cattle, for every one was instead of riches and oxen to himself and his brethren. They never conversed together by talking but when necessity required, but each one performed the labour enjoined him, joining thereto prayer, or holy meditations on Divine things: and having finished their country work, they returned to their monastery, where they spent the remainder of the day, till the

evening, in reading or writing. In the evening, at the sounding of a bell, they all left their work and immediately repaired to the church, where they remained till the stars appeared, and then went all together to their refection, eating sparingly and not to satiety, for any excess in eating, though it be only of bread, occasions luxury. Their food was bread with roots or herbs, seasoned with salt, and their thirst they quenched with a mixture of water and milk. Supper being ended, they continued about three hours in watching, prayers, and genuflexions. After this they went to rest, and at cock-crowing they arose again, and continued at prayer till day appeared. All their inward temptations and thoughts they discovered to their superior. Their clothing was of the skins of beasts. Whosoever desired to be admitted into their holy convocation was obliged to remain ten days at the door of the monastery as an offcast, unworthy to be admitted into their society, and there he was exposed to be scorned; but if, during that time, he patiently endured that mortification, he was received by the religious senior who had charge of the gate, whom he served, and was by him instructed. In that condition he continued a long time, exercised in painful labours, and grievous mortifications, and at last was admitted to the fellowship of the brethren.

"This monastery appears to have been founded by St. David, some time after the famous British synod assembled in the year 519, for crushing of the Pelagian heresy, which began again to spread

after it had been once before extinguished by St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and St. Lupus, Bishop of Troyes. This monastery is not taken notice of in the Monasticon, any more than the other two above, and for the same reason, as not coming within any of the orders afterwards known in England, and having had but a short continuance; for what became of it, or when it finished, is not known."

I chanced on this passage in the second volume of Dugdale's 'Monasticon,' as I was choosing editions of it at Mr. Quaritch's, on one of the curious days which I suppose most people recognize as 'white' among the many-coloured ones of their lives; that is to say, the days when everything goes well, by no management of their own. About the same time I received the following letter from a very old and dear friend:—

"In an old 'Fors' you ask for information about Nanterre. If you have not had it already, here is some. As you know, it is in the plain between Paris, Sèvres, and Versailles—a station on the Versailles line; a little station, at which few persons 'descend,' and fewer still ascend; the ladies of the still somewhat primitive and rather ugly little village being chiefly laundresses, and preferring, as I should in their place, to go to Paris in their own carts with the clean linen. Nanterre has, however, two notable transactions in its community. It makes cakes, sold in Paris as 'Gâteaux de Nanterre,' and dear to childhood's soul. *And*—now prick up your ears—it yearly elects a Rosière. Not a high-falutin' æsthetic, self-conscious product, forced, and in an

unsuitable sphere ; but a *real* Rosière—a peasant girl, not chosen for beauty, or reading or writing, neither of which she may possibly possess ; but one who has in some signal, but simple, *un-selfconscious* way done her duty in the state of life unto which it has pleased God to call her,—done it in the open, fresh air, and under the bright sun, in the 'fierce white light' of village public opinion : who is known to young and old, and has been known all her life.

"She is crowned with roses in May, and has a portion of rather more than 1,000 francs. She is expected soon to marry, and carry on into the higher functions of wife and mother the promise of her maidenhood."

And with this letter came another, from Francesca, giving me this following account of her servant Edwige's * native village.

"I have been asking her about 'Le Rose :' she says it is *such* a pretty place, and the road has a hedge of beautiful roses on each side, and there are roses about all the houses. . . . But now I can hardly finish my letter, for since she has begun she cannot stop running on about her birthplace, and I am writing in the midst of a long discourse about the chestnut-trees, and the high wooded hill, with the chapel of the Madonna at its summit, and the stream of clear water where she used to wash clothes, and I know not what else! She has a very affectionate recollection of her childhood, poor as it was ; and I do think that the beautiful country in which she grew up gave a sort of brightness to her life. I am very thankful that her story is going to be printed, for it has been a help to me, and will be, I think, to others."

* See 'Roadside Songs of Tuscany,' No. II., p. 80.

Yes, a help, and better than that, a light,—as also this that follows, being an account just sent me by Francesca, of a Rosy Vale in Italy, rejoicing round its Living Rose.

The Mother of the Orphans.

"In the beautiful city of Bassano, on the Brenta, between the mountains and the plain, Signora Maria Zanchetta has passed the eighty-five years of her busy, happy, and useful life, bringing a blessing to all who have come near her, first in her own family, and afterwards, for the last forty-five years, to one generation after another of poor orphan girls, to whom she has been more than a mother. She always had, from childhood, as she herself told me, a wish to enter a religious life, and her vocation seems to have been rather for the active than for the contemplative side of such a life. She belongs to an honourable family of Bassano, and appears to have had an especial love and reverence for her parents, whom she would never leave as long as they lived. After their death she continued to live with an invalid sister, Paola, whom she remembers always with great tenderness, and who is spoken of still, by those who knew her, as something very near a saint.

"I have often wondered how much of Signora Maria's sweet and beautiful Christian spirit, which has brought comfort into hundreds of lives, may be owing to the influence of the saintly elder sister, whose helpless condition must have made her seem, to herself and others, comparatively useless in the world, but who lived always so very near to heaven! After Paola died, Maria, being no longer needed at home, resolved to give herself

entirely to some charitable work, and her mind turned to the Girls' Orphan Asylum, close to her own house. Her brother and other relations would have preferred that she should have become a nun in one of those convents where girls of noble families are sent for education, considering that such a life was more honourable,* and better suited to her condition. She told me this part of her story herself, and added, 'In the convent I should have been paid for my work, but I wanted to serve the Lord without recompense in this world, and so I came here to the orphans.' There she has lived ever since, *wearing the same dress as the poor girls*,† living their life, entering into all their pleasures, and troubles; overseeing the washing, giving a hand to the mending, leading a humble, laborious life, full, one would think, of wearisome cares and burdens. A mother's burdens, without a mother's instinct to support them; but still, if one may judge by her face, she has lived in perpetual sunshine. And how young she looks still! She must have been a delicate blonde beauty in her youth, and she still retains a complexion like a sweet-briar rose, and her kind blue eyes are as clear and peaceful as an infant's. Her hair, still abundant as in youth, is quite white, and yet not like snow,

* Let me earnestly pray the descendants of old Catholic families to think how constantly their pride, the primary mortal sin, has been the ruin of all they had most confidently founded it on, and all they strove to build on such foundation.

† The good Superiora's example, comparing what we are told of the dress of the girls themselves at page 502, may well take the place of all I had to say in this last Fors, about dress, summed in the simple advice to all women of rank and wealth,—Till you can dress your poor beautifully, dress your*selves* plainly; till you can feed all your poor healthily, live yourselves like the monks of Vallis Rosina, and the message of Fors is ended.

unless it be snow with the evening sunshine upon it; one sees in a moment that it has once been golden, and it is finer than anything that I ever saw, excepting thistledown. Her dress is of the poorest and plainest, and yet I cannot feel that she would be more beautiful in any other. A blue cotton dress, and cap of the same, with a handkerchief and apron, such as are worn by the contadine, nothing else; but all arranged with scrupulous neatness. There is nothing monastic in the dress, nor in the life. Signora Maria is free to stay or go as she will; she is bound by no vow, belongs to no order; there has been nothing but the love of God, and of the poor children, to hold her to her place all these long years. She has some property, but she leaves the use of it to her family, taking for herself only just what is sufficient for her own maintenance in the asylum, that she may not take anything from the orphans. I had long wished to know this good Signora Maria, and finally, last May, I had the great pleasure of seeing her. I had sent to ask at what hour she could see me, to which she replied, 'Any time after six in the morning,' which I thought was pretty well for eighty-five!

"When, the next morning, I went with Edwige to the orphan asylum, and we entered the very modest little bottega, as they call it, with its low ceiling and counter, where they sell artificial flowers, and certain simple medicines of their own preparing, in which the Bassano people have great faith; and where also they receive orders for ornamental laundry-work, and for embroidery of a religious description,*—when, as I was saying, we entered this room, half-a-dozen elderly women were standing talking together, all in the same old-fashioned

* I should be inclined considerably to modify these directions of industry, in the organization of similar institutions here.

blue dresses. I asked if I could see the Superiora, at which this very pretty and young-looking lady came forward; and I, not dreaming that she could be the aged saint for whom I was looking, repeated my question. 'A servirla!' she replied. I was obliged to explain the astonishment, which I could not conceal, by saying, that I had expected to see a much older lady. 'I *am* old,' she answered, 'but I have good health, thank the Lord!' And then she led us through the room where a number of girls were doing the peculiar laundry-work of which I have spoken,—one cannot call it ironing, *for no iron is used about it;** but with their fingers, and a fine stick kept for the purpose, they work the starched linen into all kinds of delicate patterns. They all rose and bowed politely as we passed, and then the old lady preceded us up the stone staircase (which she mounted so rapidly that she left us some way behind her), and conducted us to a pleasant upper chamber, where we all sat down together. On this day, and on those following when I was taking her portrait, I gathered many particulars of her own life, and also about the institution, which I must write down one by one as I can remember them, for I find it impossible to arrange them in any order. She told me that they were in all seventy-five, between women and girls. Every girl taken into the institution has a right to a home in it for life, if she will; and many never choose to leave it, or if they do leave it they return to it; but others have married, or gone to service, or to live with their relations. Once, many years ago, she had seven little slave girls, put temporarily under her

* I italicize here and there a sentence that might otherwise escape notice; I might italicize the whole text, if I could so express my sympathy with all it relates.

care by a good missionary who had bought them in Africa. She seems to have a peculiar tenderness in her remembrance of the poor little unbaptized savages. 'The others call me Superiora,' she said, 'but *they* used to call me Mamma Maria.' And her voice softened to more than its usual gentleness as she said those words.

"And now I must leave the dear old lady for a moment, to repeat what Silvia told me once about those same little slave girls. It was a warm summer's evening, and Silvia and I were sitting, as we often do, on the broad stone steps of the Rezzonico Palace, between the two immense old stone lions that guard the door; and watching the sunset behind the mountains. And Silvia was telling me how, when she was a very small child, those little African girls were brought to the house, and what wild black faces they had, and what brilliant eyes. As they were running about the wide lawn behind Palazzo Rezzonico (which stands in a retired country place about a mile from the city), they caught sight of those stone lions by the door, and immediately pressed about them, and fell to embracing them, as if they had been dear friends, and covered them with tears and kisses;* and Silvia thought that they were thinking of their own country, and perhaps of lions which they had seen in their African deserts. I asked Signora Maria if she knew what had become of those poor girls. She said that she had heard that two of them afterwards entered a convent; but she had lost sight of them all for many years; and, indeed, they had only remained in Bassano for five months.

* This is to me the most lovely and the most instructive fact I ever heard, in its witness to the relations that exist between man and the inferior intelligences of creation.

"While I was drawing the old lady's portrait, a tall, strong, very pleasant-looking woman of fifty or so came in and stood beside me. She wore the same dress as the Superiora, excepting that she had no cap, nor other covering for her wavy black hair, which was elaborately braided, and knotted up behind, in the fashion commonly followed by the contadine in this part of the country. She had very bright eyes, in which a smile seemed to have taken up its permanent abode, even when the rest of her face was serious. Her voice was soft,—there seems to be something in the atmosphere of that orphanage which makes everybody's voice soft!—but her movements were rapid and energetic, and she evidently had a supply of vigour and spirit sufficient for half-a-dozen, at least, of average women. She was extremely interested in the progress of the picture, (which she said was as much like the Superiora as anything could be that was *sitting still*), but it was rather a grievance to her that the old lady *would* be taken in her homely dress. 'Come now, you *might* wear that other cap!' she said, bending over the little fair Superiora, putting her strong arm very softly around her neck, and speaking coaxingly as if to a baby; then looking at me: 'She has such a pretty cap, that I made up for her myself, and she will not wear it!' 'I wear it when I go out,' said Signora Maria, 'but I would rather have my likeness in the dress that I always wear at home.' I, too, said that I would rather draw her just as she was. 'I suppose you are right,' said the younger woman, regretfully, 'but she is so much prettier in that cap!' I thought her quite pretty enough in the old blue cap, and kept on with my work. Meanwhile I asked some questions about the institution. Signora Maria said that it was founded in the last century by a good priest,

D. Giorgio Pirani, and afterwards farther endowed by D. Marco Cremona, whom she had herself known in his old age. How old this D. Marco was she could not remember; a cast of his face, which she afterwards showed me, and which she told me was taken after his death, represented a very handsome, benevolent-looking man, of about seventy, but I imagine (judging from the rest of the conversation) that he must have been much older. She told me that the founder, D. Giorgio, having inherited considerable property, and having no relations that needed it, had bought the land and three or four houses, which he had thrown into one; and had given it all for poor orphan girls of Bassano.

"The place accommodates seventy-five girls and women, and is always full. Thirty centimes a day are allowed for the maintenance of each girl, and were probably sufficient in D. Giorgio's time, but times have changed since then. However, they do various kinds of work, principally of a religious or ecclesiastical nature, making priests' dresses, or artificial flowers for the altar, or wafers to be used at the communion; besides sewing, knitting, and embroidery of all kinds; and the women work for the children, and the whole seventy-five live together in one affectionate and united family. The old lady seemed very fond of her 'tose,' as she calls the girls, and said that they also loved her,—which I should think they would, for a more entirely loveable woman it would be hard to find.

"She has the delightful manners of an old-fashioned Venetian, full of grace, sweetness, and vivacity, and would think that she failed in one of the first Christian duties if she did not observe all the laws of politeness. She never once failed, during our rather frequent visits at the institution, to come downstairs to meet us, receiving

me always at the outside door with a kiss on both cheeks; and when we came away she would accompany us into the cortile, and stand there, taking leave, with the sun on her white hair. When, however, she found this last attention made me rather uncomfortable, she desisted; for her politeness being rather of the heart than of etiquette, she never fails in comprehending and considering the feelings of those about her.

"But to return to our conversation. The woman with the black, wavy hair, whose name was, as I found out, Annetta, remarked, with regard to the good Don Giorgio Pirani, that 'he died so young, poor man!' As it seemed he had accomplished a good deal in his life, I was rather surprised, and asked, 'How young?' To which she replied, in a tone of deep compassion, 'Only seventy-five, poor man! But then he had worn himself out with the care of the institution, and he had a great deal of trouble.' Annetta calculated age in the Bassano fashion; in this healthy air, and *with the usually simple habits of life of the people*, longevity is the rule, and not the exception. The portrait of Don Giorgio's mother hangs beside his in the refectory, with an inscription stating that it was painted 'in the year of her age eighty-nine'; also that her name was Daciana Pirani, and that she assisted her two sons, Giorgio and Santi, in their charitable work for the orphans. The picture itself bears the date 1774, and represents a fresh-coloured, erect, very pleasant-looking lady, with bright, black eyes, very plainly dressed in a long-waisted brown gown and blue apron, with a little dark-coloured cap, which time has rendered so indistinct that I cannot quite make out the fashion of it. A plain handkerchief, apparently of fine white linen, is folded over her bosom, and her arms are bare to the elbows,

with a fine Venetian gold chain wound several times around one of them,—her only ornament, excepting her little round earrings. She is standing by a table, on which are her crucifix, prayer-book, and rosary. The Superiora told me that when Don Giorgio was engaged in building and fitting up his asylum, sometimes at the table his mother would observe that he was absent and low-spirited, and had little appetite, at which she would ask him anxiously, 'What ails you, my son?' and he would reply, 'I have no more money for my workmen.' At this she always said, 'Oh, if that is all, do not be troubled! I will see to it!' And, rising from the table, she would leave the room, to return in a few minutes with a handful of money, sufficient for the immediate expenses. Don Giorgio himself must have had, if his portrait tells the truth, a singularly kind, sensible, and cheerful face, with more regular beauty than Don Marco Cremona, but less imposing, with dark eyes and white curling hair. Of Santi Pirani I could learn nothing, excepting that he was a priest, an excellent man, and his brother's helper.

"But to return to what I was saying about the Bassano fashion of reckoning age. It is not long since a Bassano gentleman, himself quite a wonderful picture of vigorous health, was complaining to me that the health of the city was not what it used to be. 'Indeed,' he said, with the air of one bringing forward an unanswerable proof of his assertion, 'at this present time, among all my acquaintances, I know only one man past a hundred! My father knew several; but now they all seem to drop off between eighty and ninety.' And he shook his head sadly. I asked some questions about his centenarian friend, and was told that he was a poor man, and lived on charity. 'We all give to him,' he

said; 'he always worked as long as he could, and at his age we do not think it ought to be expected of him.'

"As nearly as I can understand, people here begin to be considered elderly when they are about eighty, but those who die before ninety are thought to have died untimely. Signora Maria's family had an old servant, by name Bartolo Mosca, who lived with them for seventy-two years. He entered their service at fourteen, and left it (for a better world, I hope) at eighty-six. He was quite feeble for some time before he died, and his master kept a servant expressly to wait upon him. A woman servant, Maria Cometa, died in their house of nearly the same age, having passed all her life in their service.

"I was much interested in observing Annetta's behaviour to her Superiora; it was half reverential, half caressing. I could hardly tell whether she considered the old lady as a patron saint or a pet child. Anxious to know what was the tie between them, I asked Annetta how long she had been in the place. She did a little cyphering on her fingers, and then said, 'Forty years.' In answer to other questions, she told me that her father and mother had both died within a few weeks of each other, when she was a small child, the youngest of seven; and her uncle, finding himself left with the burden of so large a family on his shoulders, had thought well to relieve himself in part by putting the smallest and most helpless 'with the orphans.' '*She* has been my mother ever since,' she said, dropping her voice, and laying her hand on the little old lady's shoulder. She added that some of her brothers had come on in the world, and had wished to take her home, and that she had gone at various times and stayed in their families, but that she had always come

back to her place in the institution, because she could never be happy, for any length of time, anywhere else. I asked if the girls whom they took in were generally good, and repaid their kindness as they should do, to which the old lady replied, 'Many of them do, and are a great comfort; but others give us much trouble. What can we do? We must have patience; we are here on purpose.' 'Besides,' said Annetta, cheerfully, 'it would never do for us to have all our reward in this world; if we did, we could not expect any on the other side.'

"The Superiora told me many interesting stories about the institution, and of the bequests that had been left to it by various Bassano families, of which the most valuable appeared to be *some land in the country with one or two contadine houses*, where the girls are sent occasionally to pass a day in the open air and enjoy themselves. Many families had bequeathed furniture and pictures to the institution, so that one sees everywhere massive nutwood chairs and tables, carved and inlaid, all of old republican * times. One picture, of which I do not recollect the date, but it is about two hundred years old, I should think, represents a young lady with fair curls, magnificently dressed in brocade and jewels, by name Maddalena Bernardi, who looks always as if wondering at the simple unworldliness of the life about her; and beside her hangs the last of her race (her son, I suppose, for he is much like her in feature; but no one knows now), a poor Franciscan frate, 'Who did a great deal for the orphans,' Signora Maria says. Next to the frate, between him and good Don Giorgio, she showed me a Venetian senator, all

* Old stately times, Francesca means, when Bassano and Castelfranco, Padua and Verona, were all as the sisters of Venice.

robe and wig, with a face like nobody in particular, scarlet drapery tossed about in confusion, and a background of very black thunder-clouds. 'This picture,' she said, 'was left us by the Doge Erizzo, and represents one of his family. He left us also a hundred and twenty staia of Indian corn and two barrels of wine yearly, and we still continue to receive them.' She showed me also a room where the floor was quite covered with heaps of corn, saying, 'I send it to be ground as we need it: but it will not last long, there are so many mouths!'

"During the many days that I visited Signora Maria, I noticed several things which seemed to me different from other orphan asylums which I have seen. To be sure I have not seen a great many; but from what little I have been able to observe, I have taken an impression that orphan girls usually have their hair cut close to their heads, and wear the very ugliest clothes that can possibly be obtained, and that their clothes are made so as to fit no one in particular. Also I think that they are apt to look dull and dispirited, with a general effect of being educated by machinery, which is not pleasant. Signora Maria's little girls, on the contrary, *are made to look as pretty as is possible* in the poor clothes, which are the best that can be afforded for them. Their cotton handkerchiefs are of the gayest patterns, their hair is arranged becomingly, so as to make the most of the light curls of one, or the heavy braids of another, and most of them wear little gold earrings. And if one speaks to them, they answer with a pleasant smile, and do not seem frightened. I do not think that the dear old lady keeps them under an iron rule, by any means. Another thing which I noticed was that while many of the younger children, who had

been but a little while in the place, looked rather sickly, and showed still the marks of poverty and neglect, the older girls, who had been there for several years, had, almost without exception, an appearance of vigorous health. It was my good fortune to be there once on washing-day, when a number of girls, apparently from fifteen to twenty years old, bare-armed (and some of them bare-footed), were hanging out clothes to dry in the cortile; and such a picture of health and beauty I have seldom seen, nor such light, strong, rapid movements, nor such evident enjoyment of their work.

"Next to the room where I did most of my work was a long narrow room where many of the women and elder girls used to work together. An inscription in large black letters hung on the wall, 'Silentium.' I suppose it must have been put there with an idea of giving an orderly conventual air to the place; perhaps it may have served that purpose, it certainly did no other! The door was open between us, and the lively talking that went on in that room was incessant. Once the old lady by my side called to them, 'Tose!' and I thought that she was calling them to order, but it proved that she only wanted to have a share in the conversation. When not sitting for her portrait she used to sew or knit, as she sat beside me. She could do beautiful mending, and never wore spectacles. She told me that she *had* worn them until a few years before, *when her sight had come back quite strong as in youth.*

"But I must allow, in speaking of my friends of the orphan asylum, that some of their religious observances are a little . . . peculiar. In the large garden, on the side where Signora Maria has her flower border ('We cannot afford much room for flowers,' Annetta says, 'but they are the delight of the Superiora!')

is a long walk under a canopy of grape-vines, leading to a niche where stands, under the thick shade, a large wooden Madonna of the Immaculate Conception. She is very ugly, and but a poor piece of carving; a stout, heavy woman in impossible drapery, and with no expression whatsoever. The seven stars (somewhat rusty and blackened by the weather) are arranged on a rather too conspicuous piece of wire about the head. The last time I saw her, however, she had much improved, if not in beauty or sanctity, at least in cleanliness of appearance, which Annetta accounted for by saying complacently: 'I gave her a coat of white paint myself, *oil* paint; so now she will look well for a long time to come, and the rain will not hurt her.' I observed that some one had placed a rose in the clumsy wooden hand, and that her ears were ornamented with little garnet earrings. Annetta said, 'The girls put together a few soldi and bought those earrings for the Madonna. They are very cheap ones, and I bored the holes in her ears myself with a gimlet.' Before this Madonna the girls go on summer afternoons to sing the litanies, and apparently find their devotion in no way disturbed by the idea of Annetta's tinkering. She seems to do pretty much all the carpentering and repairing that are wanted about the establishment, and is just as well pleased to 'restore' the Madonna as anything else. I was very sorry, at last, when the time came to say good-bye to the peaceful old house and its inmates. The Superiora, on the occasion of her last sitting, presented me with a very pretty specimen of the girls' work—a small pin-cushion, surrounded with artificial flowers, and surmounted by a dove, with spread wings, on white linen, its shape, and even feathers, quite wonderfully represented by means of

the peculiar starching process which I have tried to describe. I can only hope that the dear old lady may be spared to the utmost limit of life in Bassano, which would give her many years yet, for it is sad to think of the change that must come over the little community when she is taken away. She is still the life of the house; her influence is everywhere. She reminds me always of the beautiful promise, 'They shall yet bear fruit in old age.' Once I was expressing to her my admiration for the institution, and she said, 'It is a *happy* institution.' And so it is, but it is she who has made it so."

This lovely history, of a life spent in the garden of God, sums, as it illumines, all that I have tried to teach in the series of letters which I now feel that it is time to close.

The "Go and do thou likewise," which every kindly intelligent spirit cannot but hear spoken to it, in each sentence of the quiet narrative, is of more searching and all-embracing urgency than any appeal I have dared to make in my own writings. Looking back upon my efforts for the last twenty years, I believe that their failure has been in very great part owing to my compromise with the infidelity of this outer world, and my endeavour to base my pleading upon motives of ordinary prudence and kindness, instead of on the primary duty of loving God,—foundation other than which can no man lay. I thought myself speaking to a crowd which could only be influenced by visible utility; nor was I the least aware how

many entirely good and holy persons were living in the faith and love of God as vividly and practically now as ever in the early enthusiasm of Christendom, until, chiefly in consequence of the great illnesses which, for some time after 1878, forbade my accustomed literary labour, I was brought into closer personal relations with the friends in America, Scotland, Ireland, and Italy, to whom, if I am spared to write any record of my life, it will be seen that I owe the best hopes and highest thoughts which have supported and guided the force of my matured mind. These have shown me, with lovely initiation, in how many secret places the prayer was made which I had foolishly listened for at the corners of the streets; and on how many hills which I had thought left desolate, the hosts of heaven still moved in chariots of fire.

But surely the time is come when all these faithful armies should lift up the standard of their Lord,—not by might, nor by power, but by His spirit, bringing forth judgment unto victory. That they should no more be hidden, nor overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. If the enemy cometh in like a flood, how much more may the rivers of Paradise? Are there not fountains of the great deep that open to bless, not destroy?

And the beginning of blessing, if you will think of it, is in that promise, "Great shall be the peace of thy *children*." All the world is but as one orphanage, so long as its children know not God their

Father; and all wisdom and knowledge is only more bewildered darkness, so long as you have not taught them the fear of the Lord.

Not to be taken out of the world in monastic sorrow, but to be kept from its evil in shepherded peace;—ought not this to be done for all the children held at the fonts beside which we vow, in their name, to renounce the world? Renounce! nay, ought we not, at last, to redeem?

The story of Rosy Vale is not ended;—surely out of its silence the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and round it the desert rejoice, and blossom as the rose!

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